





In Memoriam.

TRIBUTES TO THE MEMORY

OF THE
REV. C. P. GADSDEN,

LATE RECTOR OF ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, CHARLESTON, S. C.

MOSTLY DELIVERED SHORTLY AFTER HIS DECEASE; TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
AT THE REQUEST OF MANY OF HIS FRIENDS,

THIRTEEN OF HIS SERMONS,

COMPILED BY
REV. JAMES H. ELLIOTT.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

IN this Memorial to a beloved friend, I have contented myself with simply arranging the material placed in my hands. Some of these contributions have reached me within a few days, and this, together with the incessant interruptions of a city congregation, will, I hope, excuse the delay of publication. The leading motive of this compilation is, not to exalt one who, with unfeigned modesty, shrank from all praise, nor to gratify the partialities of a large circle of admirers and friends; nor even to soothe the sorrows of his bereaved and stricken family, but to magnify that grace of God, which shone so brightly and constantly in him. Tributes from so many and various quarters, prove how near he stood to the heart of the Universal Church; how sweetly and purely he represented the essence of all true religion. Men of widely different views saw in him the lineaments of the Master, and glorified Christ in him. They are republished just as they have come to me; and

are arranged in the order which commended itself to my mind as the most natural. Each writer speaks, of course, from his own point of view; and this variety should be regarded as giving additional and cumulative value to their combined testimony. Nor is this consentient voice an unimportant witness to the real unity of the Church of Christ, in the midst of all its superficial and noisy differences; and, perhaps (I speak it with diffidence), it is while contemplating a life like that of Gadsden's that we are nearest the solution of that great problem, which is pressing upon the hearts of Christ's true people; namely, how they who are one in faith, one in allegiance to a common Lord, one in baptism, so far as its essentials are concerned, may be brought into a closer unity of affection, of fraternal acknowledgment, and finally, perhaps, of external organization. Gadsden seems in a great measure, to have solved that problem for himself; and that without violating the order and discipline of that branch of the Christian Church to which he belonged. Where he saw Christ, he loved and acknowledged Him; and they who are Christ's, clasp hands, and mingle tears above his grave.

J. H. E.

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In Memoriam

REV. CHRISTOPHER PHILIP GADSDEN.



I.

TRIBUTES FROM BRETHREN OF HIS OWN CHURCH.

Sketch from "Monthly Record," dated August, 1871.

THE drapery of mourning in which "The Record" goes forth to the Diocese, poorly represents our feelings under the bereavement that has befallen our Church and community. Nor can words do more than faintly express the profound sorrow and sense of irreparable loss, with which we contemplate the breach made in our ministerial ranks. A prince has fallen in Israel. A leader, whose arm and voice were ever foremost in the great battle for Christ and truth, has been stricken down in the midst of the conflict, and we sadly ask, Who can take his place, or be to us in the future what he has been in the past?

None but those who have watched and toiled by his side can understand how deeply and extensively the life of our dear departed brother has been interwoven with the history of the Church in this Diocese and city. He was wrought into it at so many points, that the wrench of his death pulls at fibres which have found their way into a multitude of hearts. His congregation mourn the loss of a devoted, sympathizing pastor, who truly bore them on his heart, and who to the full extent, and beyond the full extent of his strength, was ever laboring for the promotion of their spiritual welfare; in private and in public, in the pulpit and in the Sunday-school, in the chamber of sickness and of affliction, in the social circle making full proof of his ministry, and ever holding up before them the one great attraction of the Saviour dying for their sins, and living for their complete redemption from corruption and death. His brethren deplore the absence of a genial, bright, and active spirit, whose zeal often quickened theirs to fresh exertion; who was ever willing to share their burdens; who brought into their counsels so buoyant and hopeful a temper; whose

judgment was as clear as his knowledge was accurate and extensive ; who was gifted with so delicate a perception of his own and others rights ; who was the very impersonation of candor, modesty, and truth. Every interest of the Church will miss his ready and faithful coöperation, which shrank from no duty, and shirked no responsibility. The community at large suffer the privation of one who was prompt to respond to every call, come from whatever quarter it might ; whose face was seen on the platform, wherever good might be achieved, and religious influence brought to bear upon civil and educational interests. The councils of the General Church will miss his wise moderation and delightful suavity of speech and manner, by which so many were impressed at the last Convention, and of which we heard at the distant North from those who had previously been unacquainted with him. Of his family we say only, that they to whom he was best known can alone feel the poignancy of a blow which has extinguished the light of their home, and left them no earthly comfort but the precious memory of his endearing qualities, and the deep sense of the

privilege accorded them of intimate communion with a soul which habitually lived in intimate communion with God.

The leading events of Mr. Gadsden's life have been already given to the public, but it will be necessary to recapitulate them more at length. He was born on the 5th of August, 1825, and thus had nearly completed his forty-sixth year. His father, Mr. John Gadsden, was a younger brother of Bishop Gadsden, and a man of considerable legal ability and literary culture, which ill health and a comparatively early death disappointed of their maturer fruits. His mother died also while he was yet a child, and he was left under the charge of his maternal aunt, Mrs. Barksdale, a lady of decided piety and excellent sense, to whose conscientious training and admirable example he always acknowledged himself deeply indebted. His religious impressions were of a gradual and gentle growth. His piety, like that of Timothy, must have dated from his childhood, steadily gaining strength and consciousness with his increasing years. He seems, through the preventing grace of God, to have escaped in great measure the irregularities and vices which too often deform

the period of youth, impairing the moral sensibilities, leaving as their bitter mementos the stains and scars of sin, and laying the foundation of habits to be subdued, if at all, only after long and painful struggles. It was in harmony with this comparatively blameless development of his Christian character that he could not refer in after life to any one remarkable stage of religious experience, although, doubtless, there were periods of deeper conviction when the pressure of divine truth made itself more consciously felt, and brought his heart and will more entirely into subjection to the obedience of faith. The most decisive of these impressions occurred in his sophomore year at Columbia, S. C., while sitting under the powerful ministry of Dr. Thornwell, and led to the complete surrender of his heart to God, and public profession of the gospel of Christ. The testimony of those who knew him in college bears ample witness to his fidelity to his confirmation vows. His companions also testify to his unusual excellence as a speaker and debater.

Dr. Thornwell recognized in him the promise of a bright and useful career, and he responded with a cordial appreciation of

the genius and piety of his distinguished instructor, which ripened into a life-long friendship. His own theological views were probably considerably influenced by the powerful presentation of that scheme of doctrinal truth of which Dr. Thornwell was so eloquent and uncompromising an expounder; and while this daily contact with one of the brightest luminaries of the Presbyterian Church did not weaken in the least his attachment for the forms and government of his own, it doubtless contributed to establish him in those views of theology which remained with him to the end of life, and which he always held to be most consonant with the creed of the Reformers, and with the acknowledged standards of the Church of England and our own.

These views, however, were not in his case the mere formulæ of a dry and sapless creed, but were the channels through which divine grace flowed, to bloom in abundant foliage and flower and fruit. His was emphatically a living faith, borrowing earnestness and solemnity and depth from his profound sense of natural depravity, of God's sovereignty, and of the fullness and sufficiency of the Saviour's work. Christ

became to him his all in all ; and when he devoted himself to the ministry of the gospel, he did so with the solemn purpose of holding Him up in his life and death, and resurrection power, as the great object of men's reliance, and the sole means of their conversion and sanctification. After the usual course of study under the direct supervision of his uncle, the then Bishop of the Diocese, he was ordained Deacon at St. Philip's, on the 4th Sunday in Advent, 1844, and was immediately engaged as an assistant to the Rev. William Dehon, then in charge of the extensive parish of St. John's.

We must not pass over this period of his life without adverting to the important influence which it was calculated to exert upon Mr. Gadsden's opinions in reference to Church questions. The system of doctrine he had embraced naturally led him to what is known as the Low Church theory, according to which, the claims of any visible ecclesiastical organization to be the true representative of the Apostolic Church rests rather upon its accordance with the doctrine and spirit of the Apostles, as exhibited in the New Testament, than upon a direct lineal succession of orders in the three

branches of the holy ministry. We cannot stop to enter into controversy which, in this connection, were entirely unsuitable ; but we notice the way in which Mr. Gadsden's position at this time tended to the completion of his theological education upon thorough and comprehensive grounds. His uncle, the Bishop, whom he personally loved, and whose character he always held in the highest esteem for its consistent and practical piety, differed from him very materially in his estimate of the claims of the Church and Liturgy ; and he was not likely to maintain his own position without a keen and searching investigation of the ground on which he stood. To this we attribute his unusual acquaintance with the controversial literature which bears upon the Constitution of the Church, the scope of her offices, the history of the Prayer Book, and the interpretation of the Rubrics. On these points he was peculiarly at home, and abundantly able to maintain himself against all comers. But his temper was too good, and his spirit too Catholic, to allow controversy to degenerate into strife ; and hence to the last the Bishop and himself remained upon the most affectionate and confidential terms,

which is saying a great deal when we remember that both were men of quick temper, and uncompromisingly tenacious in the maintenance of their opinions.

Mr. Gadsden's ministry in St. John's was eminently useful, and we are inclined to consider it one of the happiest periods of his life. He was always fond of the country, and although there is nothing peculiarly attractive or varied in the scenery of our pine lands, the very rustling of the trees and the fresh air of the forest had charms for him which more than reconciled him to the monotony of the view, bounded by interminable lines of inflexible regularity, and canopied by the sombre foliage of the pine. Here he married his first wife, the eldest daughter of Mr. Thomas W. Porcher, and in his hospitable dwelling found a congenial home, and formed ties which have lasted in undiminished tenderness to the end. During his first prolonged illness in 1870, Mr. Porcher was his untiring nurse ; and one of his latest anxieties in his final sickness was to see him before he died, and while consciousness was still left to him. In both these respects he was happily gratified.

It was in St. John's that Mr. Gadsden

had his first experience in ministering to the negroes, who formed a large proportion of the charge of these devoted ministers of Christ. From the first he showed his aptitude in interesting and instructing them, for which, indeed, his natural gifts eminently qualified him. His great fluency in extempore address, animated manner, and fertility of illustration, attracted and held their attention ; while the fervor with which he dwelt upon the love of Christ, and the solemnity of his appeals to conscience and their own experience, were the unfailing means of access to their hearts and sympathies. He very soon became the object of their affections, and his influence with this class of our population survived the shock of the war, and maintained itself against the political jealousies engendered by their enfranchisement. The galleries of his church were frequented by the colored people after they had deserted those of almost every other Episcopal Church in the city ; and his communion seasons found him ministering as usual to numbers who could not be induced to leave their pastor and tried friend by any appeal to prejudices of color and caste. Among those who flocked to his fu-

neral they were largely represented, and we feel assured there were no sincerer mourners at the side of his grave. Last year, when his death was daily expected, one of their prominent leaders observed that the night before two thousand of the freedmen of Charleston were praying for his continuance amongst us ; and we see no reason to suppose that the statement was at all an exaggerated one.

It was this same happy power of adapting himself to their capacities, added to the affectionate interest which he always manifested in them, that rendered our dear brother so universal a favorite among the young. Much of his Sunday's labor was devoted to their instruction, and in this department of his ministerial work he ever took especial delight. It was his custom, we are told, not only to be present with the school in the morning, but to gather the children around him for half an hour before the afternoon service, and to lecture to them in his happy and impressive way. He had been thus engaged lately, expounding to them the Apostles' Creed, clause by clause. The day before he was taken sick, he had reached the words "life everlasting." Hav-

ing addressed them upon the former of these pregnant terms, he told them, that upon the coming Sunday he would conclude the whole series by explaining what was to be understood by "*everlasting.*" When the appointed hour came, he was himself upon the very eve of entering upon the full blessedness of that life, and of knowing, as man on earth cannot know, the mysteries of the eternal and far more exceeding weight of glory, which was awaiting him before the throne of God his Saviour.

But to return : In 1852, upon the death of his uncle, then the Rector of St. Philip's Church, in Charleston, the Rev. John B. Campbell, the former assistant, was called to the Rectorship of the parish, and Mr. Gadsden was invited to fill the vacant place. Here he spent nearly six years, laboriously and faithfully discharging the duties of a city minister, remaining at his post during the epidemics of 1854 and 1856, and exposing himself with unflinching fortitude to the perils of the season. During these years, he was preaching to a congregation, many of whom could hardly be said to sympathize with him in either his doctrinal or church views ; but such was the geniality of his dis-

position, the uniform courteousness of his demeanor, and the evident sincerity and frankness of his convictions, that when he left them, those who differed from him most widely were delighted to retain him as a friend. During this engagement he had other inviting calls to churches at the North, and in his own native city,—how many we know not, for he was very reticent on these subjects; but he declined them all, believing that for the time his path had been decided by the providence of God, and willing to retain a subordinate place, when he might have been at the head of large and flourishing congregations.

He was also engaged during this period in editorial work, in which he took great interest, being one of three who conducted the “*Southern Episcopalian*,” a monthly magazine devoted to the cause of religion and of the Church in this Diocese. Many of its most popular articles were from his pen; and after the death of the Rev. J. A. Shanklin, he continued to conduct it with his surviving co-laborer until the war put a close to its existence. Many happy hours, the remembrance of which is deeply cherished by the last of this little band, were spent in consul-

tation and prayer for the success of their labors in a field which called for continual circumspection and prudent forbearance.

In the year 1857, some difficulties occurred in St. Philip's Church, between the Rev. Mr. Campbell and his Vestry, into which it is needless now to enter; and Mr. Gadsden, from motives of delicacy, which at the time we considered almost overstrained, concluded to tender his resignation, and enter upon another field opened to him by the providence of God in the northeastern section of the city. This step he took after much prayer, and to the great regret of the congregation of St. Philip's. He was now about to enter upon the arduous work of creating and building up a new parish, a far more difficult task in our stationary and conservative population than among the ever fluctuating and swelling masses of the North. In pursuance of this design, a plain wooden structure, now known as St. Mark's Church, was erected upon Elizabeth Street, and here for several years he labored with much success in gathering a congregation around him and preparing the ground for a larger and more suitable edifice. In due time the corner-stone of the present St. Luke's was laid,

and into the details of its construction Mr. Gadsden threw himself with all his wonted ardor, watching it as it approached completion with the affection of a parent for his child. The cost of lot and building was large, and left the congregation burdened with a considerable debt. Had things remained as they were at the inception of the enterprise, no serious difficulty would have been experienced in paying off these incumbrances ; but the breaking out of the war threw everything into confusion, dispersed the congregation, and, finally, swept away their means ; and when after the surrender of Charleston they slowly gathered back to their homes, the embarrassment was such as to make it a serious question whether it would be possible to save their bonds from foreclosure, and the church from falling into the auctioneer's hands. Nothing but Mr. Gadsden's influence, and his deep hold upon the affections of his people, prevented this misfortune. At one crisis he pledged the bulk of his remaining property for the redemption of the debt, and actually sold a considerable portion of it to raise the means to meet the first installment. This generous act was but of a piece with his uniform disregard of his

own interest, when what he conceived to be the honor of Christ and of his Church was in the balance. At a subsequent period he declined inviting prospects of usefulness elsewhere, upon the understanding that his people would take immediate steps to extricate St. Luke's from its involved and dangerous position. Arrangements to this effect were almost consummated, when the summons came to him to leave his earthly cares and enter into his rest. Let us hope that his efforts, prayers, and sacrifices will not have been in vain, and that they who loved him so in life will not suffer his work to be scattered, and that St. Luke's will be preserved to the Diocese and city, as the most suitable monument which can survive to tell of the priceless devotion of their beloved pastor.

Mr. Gadsden's patriotism was one of the natural sentiments to which he gave full sway. Not that it ever hurried him beyond the bounds prescribed by the highest religious principle. He never, in the ardor of his political convictions, forgot that he was a minister of Christ, or that he belonged to a kingdom which was not of this world. No personal bitterness was mingled with the

sense of a great wrong inflicted upon the South, upon his beloved State, and upon the city of his birth. An ardent admirer and disciple of the great Calhoun, an admirable portrait of whom, inherited, we believe, from his father, hung in his drawing-room, he accepted his interpretation of the Constitution, and of the relations of the several States in sovereign parties to the federal compact. Hence, when war came, he regarded it as the only means left the South of vindicating these great principles, and was willing that his fortune, and if need be his life, should be hazarded in the struggle for their maintenance. He never degenerated into what is called a political preacher, but he encouraged his people under their reverses, ministered freely of his substance and time and personal strength in supplying the destitute, comforting the bereaved, and tending the pallets of our wounded and dying soldiers; and when his congregation had been scattered, and it was no longer possible to open St. Luke's for service, he employed himself in preaching and ministering to the confederate forces stationed around the city. When defeat came, he received it as the will of God, and without

questioning the Supreme decree, although it shattered the human aspirations of his whole life, resumed the duties of a parish minister with undiminished zeal and patience. Henceforth he looked only towards the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Life became to him yet more a pilgrimage, the world yet more a wilderness, heaven yet more a home. His whole nature concentrated itself with redoubled interest upon his work, and his spirit plumed itself afresh for higher flight towards the founts of glory.

In addition to the burdens laid upon him by the misfortunes of the war, Mr. Gadsden had griefs of a more private nature. In 1858 he buried a boy in whom were garnered many hopes ; and during the war, in 1864, within a month of each other, he was called to surrender his only daughter and his beloved wife. These successive strokes, to which his affectionate temper made him keenly susceptible, he bore with a beautiful resignation ; committing them one after another to the arms of his Saviour, with an unfaltering trust in his faithfulness and love, and rejoicing in the decisive proofs which were vouchsafed him of their interest in the covenant of salvation.

When time had healed these wounds, he entered once more into the wedded estate, and in the partner who has lived to survive him found a tender helpmeet and a wise counselor, who could enter into all his views, and was ever ready to share and lighten his burdens. May the God of all comfort support and strengthen her in this great sorrow, teaching her by actual experience that his grace is sufficient for her, and that there is no tear, come from how deep a fount it may, that his hand is not loving enough to wipe away.

As may be supposed, Mr. Gadsden was a hard and indefatigable worker. His constitution seemed a good one, and his animal spirits were remarkably buoyant and elastic. These remained with him to the last, and undoubtedly contributed mainly to enable him to bear up against the continual strain to which his mind and body were subjected. But they also helped, perhaps, to blind him to the danger to which he was exposed, of falling a sacrifice to his zeal. At length, in the spring of 1870, his overtaxed powers gave way, and he was laid upon a bed of sickness, from which it was feared he would never arise. The best medical skill of the

city pronounced his case hopeless, and one of his brethren in the ministry was commissioned to tell him that his end was approaching. But Mr. Gadsden, although he received the intimation with entire calmness, expressed his opinion to the contrary. He did not doubt their superior skill and knowledge of his case, but simply said that he felt no consciousness that death was at hand, and that it was his belief that God would raise him, up and permit him once more to carry the message of salvation to dying men. And, strange to say, spite of all the prognostications of physicians and friends, after hovering for weeks between life and death, he was, like Hezekiah, resuscitated, and after a few months spent at the North, returned in the fall astonishingly restored to an appearance at least of his former health. But it was, as subsequent events have proved, in appearance only. He looked too well for one whose vital powers had been so recently and utterly prostrated, and one of whose capital organs, the usual centre of functional derangement in our climate, had been pronounced to be "utterly worn out." But of this critical condition of his system he seemed unconscious, and plunged once more into all

his parochial duties with undiminished activity. So things went on through the spring of this year. At the earnest solicitation of his Vestry, he consented for a time to forego his afternoon discourses, but even these he resumed about two months before his death. Summer came on, and an unusually hot July found him at his post, in the full exercise of all his powers, preaching, lecturing, visiting as usual. But the hour had come. On Sunday, the 16th of July, he complained of unusual weariness, and spent upon his couch the hours not actually engaged in the services of the sanctuary. On Monday morning he expressed himself as being unusually well — went out, but returned about midday, with symptoms of a dangerous character. A distressing nausea now set in, and his physicians again began to feel the most serious apprehensions as to his condition. The alarm spread, and anxious friends thronged around his bedside, to watch the progress of the case. This time he seemed to have the sentence of death within himself. To one brother he said, “I feel that my work is done ;” to another, “I am like a watch whose mainspring is broken ;” again, “I seem like one waiting at the ferry while

the boat is approaching." Willing to remain, he was still more willing to go; and as his disease assumed more evidently fatal proportions, his hope and assurance rose with it, and putting from him all thought of life, he addressed himself with marvelous calmness to the discharge of such work as was left to his failing strength. Messages of love were sent to his congregation, to his Sunday-school, to his brethren in the ministry, and to his aged Bishop, between whom and himself there had always existed a most tender and confidential affection. There were other confidences and beautiful manifestations of Christian spirit, over which, as too sacred, we drop a veil. Love to all seemed now the overpowering sentiment of his soul, even faith and hope becoming dim in comparison. In that supreme moment, like his beloved Master, he thought of others rather than himself. He was raised so entirely above doubt and fear, that all his anxieties were for them whom he was leaving behind. Of his former sickness he expressed the thought that he had been raised up to give to his people a final testimony, as from the grave, to the sufficiency and power of the truths which he had preached to them. Of him-

self he said, that during this sickness his views of sin and Christ were such as he had never known before. On Sunday, the 23d, he received the Communion from the hands of the Rev. Mr. Howe, recently elected Assistant Bishop of the Diocese; and on Monday, at about a quarter past four in the afternoon, he breathed his last. About twenty minutes before his death, he was lifted from his bed into a therapeutic chair, and raising his arms, or alluding to the fact of their being raised by his attendants into a position suggestive of such a thought, he murmured, "I am reaching toward my inheritance." Shortly after, without a struggle, he fell asleep in Jesus.

It will not do to forget, though we fear we have omitted many interesting particulars which, as evidences of divine grace, we would not willingly let die, how upon a previous day he called an old friend and relative, Mr. James Holmes, to him, and mentioned that there was a verse written in his Bible, which he wished him to refer to as exactly expressive of his feelings in view of death. The history of these lines was remarkable, and they seemed to have made a deep impression upon him. The words are these:—

“IN PEACE LET ME RESIGN MY BREATH,
And thy salvation see ;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.”

We hope, when his epitaph is written, they will be inscribed upon his tomb.¹

¹ The history of these simple and affecting lines is given in the admirable memoir of Dr. Marsh, written by his daughter, the well known author of the “Life of Captain Hedley Vicars.” It is well worth reproducing here. During a visit to Lord Roden, at Tollymore Park, Ireland, “Dr. Marsh told the story of the blessed change which took place in the views of his old school-master, Dr. Valpy, repeating a verse he had written as his confession of faith, not long before his death. Lord Roden requested my father to write out the lines for him, and then fastened the paper over the mantel-piece in his study. It hangs there still, yellow with age, its firm and legible characters bringing to memory with almost painful vividness the beloved one who traced them.

“Some time after Lord Roden had adopted this verse for the motto of his study, one of the old heroes of Waterloo, General Taylor, came to visit him at Tollymore. He had not, at that time, thought much on the subject of religion, and preferred to avoid all discussion of it. But whenever he came into the study, to talk with his friend alone, Lord Roden remarked that the eyes of the old soldier invariably rested for a few moments upon the motto over the mantelpiece. At length he broke the ice by saying, ‘Why, General, you will soon know that verse by heart.’ ‘I know it now by heart,’ replied the General, with emphasis and feeling.

“From the hour of that visit, a change came over his spirit and life. No one who was intimately acquainted with him could doubt its reality. During the following two years he corresponded regularly with Lord Roden about the things which concerned his peace, always concluding his letters by quoting the favorite motto.

“At the end of that time, the physician who had attended

The funeral of our brother took place on Tuesday afternoon, the 25th, at five o'clock. It was the occasion of such a demonstration as has been seldom witnessed in our city. There was no pageantry ; the services were of the simplest character ; but the community seemed moved to its heart, and without respect to color or sect, gathered to testify its admiration and love for one who himself embraced all in his overflowing affection. Ministers of all denominations stood around the chancel, and followed the body to its final resting place, almost a mile away. Five of his brethren divided the burial service among them, and at the grave

General Taylor wrote to Lord Roden to say that his friend had departed in peace ; and that the last words which fell from his lips were those which he had learned to love in life-time.

“ It happened in after years that Lord Roden told this story at the house of a near neighbor. A young relative of the family, an officer in the army, who had recently returned from the Crimea, heard it, but turned carelessly away. Some months later Lord Roden received the intelligence that his young acquaintance was in a rapid decline, and was desirous of seeing him without delay.’

“ As he entered the sick-room the dying man stretched out both hands to welcome him ; at the same moment repeating these simple lines : ‘ They have been God’s message,’ he said, ‘ of peace and comfort to my heart in this illness, when brought to my memory, after days of darkness and distress, by the Holy Ghost the Comforter.’ ”

the assembled throng sang two of his favorite hymns, "Rock of Ages," and "There is a land of pure delight;" and the earth closed, until the resurrection morn, upon the mortal remains of one of the most loveable and delightful of Christ's witnesses upon earth.

And he was truly, in life and death, Christ's witness. This was the distinguishing feature of his whole ministry. From first to last Christ was the burden of his preaching. Like the Apostle, he seemed to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified. What men might think of this devotion to a single subject, he cared not. In comparison with the gospel of salvation, he knew of nothing which could claim an instant's regard. He loved beauty. No one found more delight than he in exploring the treasures of European art, when some years ago he was obliged to visit England and the Continent for health. No one gazed with more rapture upon the evidences of divine goodness and creative skill, as displayed in the coloring of the heavens, the changeful play of ocean, the rich sweep of the varied landscape, the silent majesty of the snow-crowned mountains: with what enthusiasm

we have heard him descant upon each and all! Nor was he in any degree insensible to the charms of literature, and especially of poetry — nor unwilling to lay them all under contribution when they could be used to illustrate the subject in which his soul found chief delight. But that subject was Christ, nor could anything divert him from it, nor was anything allowed for an instant to obscure it. This singleness of view may have offended the taste of some, but to him who had his eye constantly fixed upon the Sun of Righteousness as the grand luminary of the spiritual and moral world, such devotion was perfectly natural. At all events, we can safely leave it to our brother's dying bed, and to the scene around his grave, to plead the wisdom of his choice. None who witnessed them but would say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

We have said little of our brother's preaching, and only incidentally touched upon his intellectual endowments. As the basis of all, he had a quick and clear apprehension, a retentive and ready memory. He seized rapidly the material points of the subject before him, whether read or dis-

cussed, and could always restate them with precision and fullness. It followed from this that in argument he was singularly ready and acute, being never at fault for either thoughts or suitable expressions. His mind was rather legal than philosophical, and his intellectual leaning more to metaphysics than science. He might have been eminent at the bar or in the chair of logic, had his calling been such. But these mental characteristics appeared far more in conversation than in preaching, in which neither argument nor metaphysics held a prominent place. His delight was to unfold Scripture and dwell upon the perfections of the Redeemer. Of this theme he never grew weary, and to him, "*Thus saith the Lord*" stood in the place of all argument.

Upon the platform he was a great favorite, and there were few occasions of missionary gatherings or Bible Society anniversaries when his powers were not called into requisition. Then he quickly kindled with his theme, and poured forth the unstudied utterances of his heart with a most happy and engaging facility. Sometimes in these extemporary effusions he rose above the highest level of his written discourses, but

he never disappointed expectation, or failed to warn, instruct, and please his audience.

We might run on at much greater length, and still feel that a thousand things had been left unsaid which could have been said without fear of tiring those for whom we write. But what a precious legacy and lesson our brother has left to the Church ! How fortunate the congregation who has enjoyed the ministrations of such a pastor — the community which has numbered him among its citizens — the brethren who have been privileged to watch and share his labors ! And how solemnly near have the closing scenes of his life brought eternity, and Christ the eternal Judge, to our view ! We have almost been permitted to hear the words, “ Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” And shall we not lay it to heart ? Will we not all strive to follow him as he followed Christ ? Blessed is that man whom when He cometh his Lord shall find so doing.

J. H. E.

A SERMON,

PREACHED JULY 30, 1871, IN ST. LUKE'S CHURCH,
CHARLESTON, S. C., ON THE DEATH OF ITS
RECTOR, REV. C. P. GADSDEN.

BY REV. W. B. W. HOWE.
ASSISTANT BISHOP ELECT.

EULOGIES.—It is difficult to speak in such a way as to satisfy your hearer. For one, who knows all about, and who loves the dead, will think you fall short of what he knows; while another, not so familiar with them, will suppose you have exaggerated, if he hears anything above his own nature. For eulogies are endured just so long and so far as each one thinks *he* could do what he hears; but what goes beyond him, he disbelieves.—THUCYD. 2d, 35th.

“Fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.”—ROM. xii. 11.

IN these last chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle enters upon the practical lessons which are to be drawn from the deep discourse which he had held in the earlier and middle portion of his Epistle. In this earlier portion, there are “some things hard to be understood;” but in the last part, and on to the end, he who “runs may read.”

It is so with my text, and the kindred exhortations which accompany it. They all speak of the every-day duties of a Christian both towards God and towards his neighbor. Whether or not we apprehend the “deep things of God,” which He commissioned his servant to speak in this Epistle, we need not be at fault when we come to words like these: “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another. Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit: serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope: patient in tribulation: continuing instant in prayer: distributing to the necessity of saints: given to hospitality.”

In thinking what Scripture words I should choose to place at the head of some remarks upon the death of our dear brother, the Rector of St. Luke’s, among the many which suggested themselves to me as being characteristic of him, were those of the text, “Fervent in spirit: serving the Lord.” I think you will all agree with me, though you might have chosen other passages, that this one belongs to him in a remarkable degree; for to be “fervent in spirit” means to have your heart set on fire with zeal for God,

just as Apollos had in Ephesus, who, being “fervent in the spirit, spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord ;” and just as St. Paul, at Athens, had his “stirred within him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry ;” for the “coals thereof,” in the words of Solomon, “are coals of fire which hath a most vehement flame.”

Every one of us have our gifts, one after this manner and another after that ; and the *charismata*, as St. Paul calls them, of Christians, are natural gifts, heightened and intensified by the fusing power of the Holy Ghost. It is true, some of the ancient *charismata* were eminently supernatural in their character ; as, for instance, those gifts of healing, the gift of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, the discerning of spirits, and others. But then again, when the Apostle speaks of the Spirit, as “dividing unto every man, severally, as He will,” and when he says, in connection with the text, “Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,” he does not mean gifts which are necessarily miraculous, but also what we call natural gifts, exalted and perfected to the Master’s use by the Holy Spirit. Even natural gifts come of course

from God, but you can conceive how these may be expanded and elevated in the manner I have tried to indicate. In other words, brethren, the grace of God, which is by Jesus, takes us just as it finds us, and makes the most it can out of us. Hence you will see as great differences among the best of Christians as among other people, simply because our characteristics are developed in the line of their proper direction.

Now, one striking characteristic of our dear brother of St. Luke's, and which, probably, has impressed every one who met him, was his great *earnestness*. This was his gift by nature, as we say, and had he chosen any other calling than that of the sacred ministry, he would have unfailingly exhibited it. Had he elected the bar, for example, his clients would have had him with them with all his heart and soul, and he would have pressed their interests and their claims from court to court.

Devoting himself, as he did, to the work of the ministry, and feeling deeply its responsibilities, and having his whole soul, down to its lowest depth, pervaded by the love of Christ, and being "instant in prayer," we need not be surprised at the

one common judgment rendered, not alone by the church whose minister he was, but by our community, as being a man who was “fervent in spirit: serving the Lord.”

Let me then, as well as I can, and craving your indulgence for my most imperfect sketch, which cannot but disappoint you, glance briefly at a most precious life, which, for you and me, alas! has been quenched in the grave, but which still lives unto God, and which here on earth has not been lived in vain.

Christopher Philip Gadsden, the son of John and Ann Gadsden, was born in this city on the 5th of August, 1825. By both father and mother he came of good Carolina stock, identified with the early interests of the State, and which bore its full share of self-denial with others in the war of the colonies with England. He was baptized in St. Philip’s Church on the 30th of September, 1825, and at her chancel, in due time, with other children of the congregation, he “said his catechism.” When but six years old he lost his father; and in three more years his mother likewise went down into the grave, leaving him in charge of a widowed maternal aunt; a woman of de-

voted piety, who became a second mother to him, and to whom he ever showed an affection which was nothing less than filial. His second *father* was his uncle, the late Bishop Gadsden. But I must hurry on. In due time he entered the South Carolina College, and up to this time, I believe, he had not exhibited very much, if any, interest in the things of Christ, which so remarkably characterized his after years. The chaplain of the college was Dr. Thornwell, and through his preaching it was, under God, that our brother was awakened to a higher life, and to the reality of the world to come. His baptismal gift, which hitherto had lain more or less dormant, now burst its seed-coat, and forthwith began to bloom. He renewed and ratified his baptismal covenant in Confirmation, and from thence went to the Holy Communion, and ever since, as many can testify, has shone brightly for Christ, until at last the dawn has lost itself in the perfect day. His college course was eminently honorable to himself, and he graduated with distinction in 1844.¹

¹ A classmate writes, in reference to his college life: "It was his custom to assemble two or three friends in his

Knowing him as we do now, we need not to be told that, on quitting college, he could do nothing less than make choice of the sacred ministry for his work in life. Penetrated as he was with the deepest affection for his Saviour, and with a most ardent love for the souls of men, how could he help devoting himself to the work of preaching, all his life long, the unsearchable riches of Christ? On leaving college, therefore, he became at once a candidate for Holy Orders, and pursued his theological studies under the direction of his uncle, Bishop Gadsden. Completing these according to the prescribed course, and having passed the necessary examinations, he was admitted into the Diaconate in the latter part of the year 1847, and in St. Philip's Church. Immediately after his ordination, he was called into the parishes of St. Stephen's and Upper St. John's, including, also, Middle St. John's Berkley, as an assistant minister, in his large cure, to Rev. Wm. Dehon, the rector. Here he was made Priest in the church in Pineville, December, 1849. There, too, in rooms, on every Sunday evening, when a sermon was read, besides other exercises suitable to the day. I remember we listened to nearly the whole of *Melville's Sermons*, which were often selected on such occasions."

Mr. Dehon, he met an entirely kindred spirit, and one who was equally devoted with himself to the service of his Master. They were most unlike in temperament, but each admirably supplemented the other. The one, brimful of a high and holy enthusiasm which never run low ; the other, calm and wise, and with a supreme judgment of men and things, and of an almost angelic purity of character, and as firm as a rock when he had reached a conclusion. For about five years these two walked hand in hand together, and took sweet counsel each with the other ; and together they labored to win souls unto Jesus, and to build them up in the knowledge of the Lord. In those days a very large portion of a country clergyman's labors was upon the plantations, and addressed to the then slave population. After morning service, at the parish church, the clergyman would ride for miles, and hold a second and third, and sometimes a fourth service, on Sunday. In neat chapels, built expressly for worship, or in buildings adapted to the same, he would gather his congregations, and preach the only Name whereby we can be saved, and administer the sacraments as the Lord hath appointed.

And the work which these two dear brethren did in this way, along with many others, I cannot believe to have been all in vain. I know it was not at the time, and I believe, moreover, hereafter, like "bread cast upon the waters," it will be found "after many days." We plead the demoralization of the late war as an excuse for things which would not have been heard of among us before the war; let us remember this when tempted to ask, What profit in all this labor that was once spent by clergymen upon the old plantations? Shall a moral earthquake shake us, and not those also who are on our very door-steps? On week days, as well as on Sundays, these faithful labors were carried on, and to the last of his life our brother continued to feel the deepest interest in the spiritual welfare of the colored portion of his earliest charge.

Thus time rolled on, and found him "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," wherever he was.

In June, 1852, his uncle, Bishop Gadsden, Rector of St. Philip's Church, died, and the place of assistant minister in that church became vacant; and who could more worthily be called to it than our brother? It

was the church of his ancestry, and of his own childhood and youth ; and his affections went out to it with all the warmth of his generous nature. But a nobler ambition stirred within him than merely to minister at the time-honored altar of the mother church of the diocese, or to preach from her pulpit ; he felt the opportunity which would be given him to pray men, “in Christ’s stead, to be reconciled unto God ;” and so, not without pain to his affectionate heart, he sundered the connection between himself and the calm quiet of his country parish, and the “still atmosphere of delightful studies,” and association with the rector of Upper St. John’s, and came to the city, and to the anxieties, and responsibilities, and incessant occupation of a large city cure. And with what ardor did he throw himself into his new work. The Bible class, the lecture-room, the Sunday-school ; his earnest preaching, which drew many to hear him ; his visits to the sick and dying, together with his zeal and love, which were so conspicuous in them all, did they not put you in mind of the days of Cobia, and did it not seem as if Cobia’s mantle had fallen upon him ?

And in addition to all this strictly parish work, he soon found himself on important church committees, where his quick perceptions and fertile mind were invaluable. A member of the Board of Managers of the Society for the Advancement of Christianity in South Carolina, I have over and over again admired the facility with which, almost in a twinkling, he would suggest ways to solve difficulties. I have seen the same celerity of judgment exhibited in the Standing Committee. Sometimes he would be overquick to reach his conclusions, but he could always give you a reason for them. When I have been asked about this or that point, and could give no satisfactory answer, my next words have generally been, "Gadsden can tell you all about it;" and if he did not know, he would be able usually to put you in the way of knowing. For years, too, he has been a delegate to the General Convention of the Church, and has had a place among the members composing the General Board of Missions. On nearly every important church committee in this diocese his name was pretty certain to appear, and in its duties he took an active and useful part. In a word, to show in what

esteem he was held at home, where he had ministered for well-nigh a quarter of a century, I have but to remind you how, at our last Convention, he was repeatedly, and for fourteen successive ballots, elected by his brethren of the clergy to the Episcopate, being at the same time well sustained by the laity. And if it had pleased God to call him to that office and administration, and to have spared his life to enter upon its duties, most unquestionably he would have exhibited, by his piety, devotion, and zeal, some of the very highest characteristics which ought ever to mark an incumbent of the Apostolic office.

But not by us alone of South Carolina was he esteemed. He was better known throughout our whole communion than any other clergyman in the diocese. Repeatedly has he had from many quarters, and some of them the chief cities in the country, calls to large and important parishes ; but while no man had a larger heart for the interests of Christ's kingdom everywhere, he, nevertheless, clung to Charleston, and to his own struggling church, with the most supreme devotion. Among his many duties, likewise, and for several successive years before the

late war, he edited, in conjunction with another brother and a bosom friend, and who could have spoken to you of him far better than I can, a church periodical, and did it as he did everything else, with the purest zeal and love. But whatever else he did, the work which he felt to be most directly characteristic of the Christian ministry, and which certainly most distinguished him, was to preach with all his might and main, “Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” He did not, I think, underestimate in others that organizing capacity which set in motion parish work, such as homes and schools, and visiting committees and the like; but this was not his forte. His heart was set on pleading for Christ from the pulpit, in the Sunday-school, by catechizing children, and in meetings for prayer. And he had peculiar gifts for this work of the ministry, and in a measure which is not often possessed by his brethren. His elocution, although inclined to be redundant, was extremely warm and animating: his language easy, flowing, and chaste: his fancy, exuberant and requiring the bit and check-rein, kindled as he warmed with his subject; and as he told you of the love of Jesus, and from a

heart filled with that love to overflowing, his face beamed and his eye brightened, and you had before you, and not a doubt of it, a man of whom it could be said, “The love of Christ constraineth us.” How happily could he address children ! He was so fertile in illustrations, and in word-painting, that he seldom failed to win their undivided attention. If I were to criticise his preaching, I would say that his heart was so warm, that sometimes it was not patient enough to wait upon the head, or to allow a sufficient address to the understanding, but leaped at once, and with a single bound, to the desired conclusion, and before his hearers were quite prepared for it. But this, if it was a fault, was only because he was so “fervent in spirit.” His position in church matters, and in reference to theological questions, was distinct and emphatic. He was of the Calvinistic school in our Church. Here he was with all his heart. But what to many of us are the repulsive features in that system of doctrine, he never brought out in his preaching — at least I never heard him ; and I am convinced he did not, just because he could not. He had too much heart about him, and too

large a share of the affections, and too many kindly and cheerful social instincts to preach straight out the system of Jonathan Edwards, in all its cold and cheerless logic. The side of Calvinism which he presented, was ever its amiable side, and where we can all agree with him heartily, that we “can do nothing without Christ,” and that every true Christian is bound to say with an Apostle, “By the grace of God I am what I am.” And it is the glory of the Anglican Church, my brethren, and a mark of her catholicity, that she embraces, and truly embraces, men who honestly differ within certain prescribed limits. If she tolerates Laud on the one hand, she no less tolerates Leighton upon the other. Tolerates, did I say? Nay, she kisses the hem of Leighton’s robes, and reckons him among her saints. Into this spirit of toleration our dear brother fully entered.¹ Decided as he was in his own views of truth, and advocating them with great positiveness and assurance, he never doubted but

¹ He more than tolerated, at times, those who did not see as he did in all things. Thus, at the late election already referred to, and after a most unusual number of ballotings, he withdrew his own name, and nominated, and begged his friends to cast their vote for the writer, who had received, but not at all to the same extent which he had, a portion of the suffrages of the Convention.

that you could reject his conclusions with just as much sincerity as he embraced them. He was not the man to judge you, but left you to your own Master to stand or fall. Though you were what in common phrase is called a "High Churchman," he never for a moment thought you could not, consequently, preach the gospel, or that your true position was in communion with the see of Rome. And while he thus acknowledged our right and title to be where we are, and that we had a work to do for the Master as well as himself, he only asked of us not to doubt his loyalty and affection to the Church of his fathers, and of the English reformers. Brethren, I do not believe that the Protestant Episcopal Church had, in all our diocese, a truer son, or a more devoted admirer than our brother of St. Luke's. And, as to the Prayer Book, it stood second only to the Bible in his estimation. No doubt he thought it could be amended in some things, as we all do, though we might differ as to *what* things; but, under existing circumstances, I do not believe he would have favored any change whatever — no, not so much as one iota.

But while he was thus devoted to the

Church in which he had been brought up, and while he believed it the most catholic of existing communions, he could not shut his eyes, any more than the rest of us can, to the lovely Christian example, and holy walk and zeal, which mark so many who do not belong to our household of faith. Episcopal ordination he regarded not as *essential* to a validly constituted ministry, but simply as historical, and as the mode handed down from the beginning — important for the well-being, but not for the being of the ministry. And here he was, to a certain extent, sustained by Hooker, and by many of the Edwardian and Elizabethan divines, who, as some of us think, swayed by their sympathies for the necessities of the Continental reformers, and by the pressure of the Papacy, did, for a while, and in their bitter controversies with Rome, some of them, comparatively lose sight of the ancient traditions of the universal Church in this particular. We all long for unity, and to see our Lord's vesture once more without a rent, and no one more so than did our brother ; and with his views, shared by many of our brightest lights, he went where some of us could not follow him. But whatever

he might do in the way of what he thought an effort after Christian union, he did not consult merely his own aspirations ; but what he did in this direction, he did because he believed he had a right to do it. Never would he have broken the least of the laws of his Church, whatever he might have thought of their inexpediency, so long as they *were* laws, in order to yield to his own judgment and inclinations. Here, as elsewhere, he would have taken up his cross, and never have done violence to what he believed to be the declared order of the Church. I say all this because sometimes, he thought himself misunderstood in these regards, and because he feared that his deep attachment to the Church, as she is, was not fully appreciated by others ; but, unquestionably, he was mistaken herein, and in due time would have seen it.

In a recent and most pleasant interview that I had with him, and in which I told him that in the future which awaits me, I should lean upon him and count upon his support, he told me that I should have it earnestly and warmly, and that he had no doubt at all of being able to coöperate with me fully ; and he added, in reference to him-

self, that so far from being not fixed in his affections for the Church to which he belonged, he felt rather that there were two objects on which he had placed them, if anything, too strongly, and to the exclusion of more distant objects of sympathy, and these two objects were his native State, and the Church in that State.

But let me turn elsewhere, and catch a brief and passing glimpse of other phases of his character. Some of us, my brethren, are wont to live altogether for this world, and so as to shut out from our minds the powers of the world to come ; while others, dwelling upon the unseen and eternal, are inclined to underrate the passing claims and excitements of temporal interests, and to regard them of small moment, in comparison with the truths of our redemption. But of our brother, it was said by one who knew him well, that he lived in both worlds at the same time, more than any other whom he was acquainted with. He lived with God, and communed with Christ, and yet took, without undue absorption, the liveliest interest in all that went on in the world around him. And is it not hard to connect death, and the slumber and silence of the

grave, with such active persons, who have taken part in almost everything? Does it not seem as if the places which heretofore have known them so well must know them again? It is so with him whom we mourn. It will be long ere we cease to look for him at the missionary meeting, at our conventions, and wherever else, in the Church or in the community at large, activity and zeal are demanded.

Glance at the words of Scripture which St. Paul has written in close connection with the text, and how do we seem to see our brother in them, as in a mirror, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer, given to hospitality." Who that knew him well does not know how unfailingly the faith that was in Jesus made him, in the language of the Apostle, to "rejoice in hope"? Like all of us, he had his share of discouragements, and consequent times of depression, but invariably his soul took wing for, and found a refuge in, the things which are above, "where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God," and "he endured as seeing Him who is invisible." It is not too much to say of him, in this connection, that in him the beautiful

Collect for Ascension Day met, more or less, its answer: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe thy Only Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to have ascended into the heavens, so we may, also, in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end." And how characteristic of him, also, are those other words of the Apostle, "distributing to the necessity of saints." Few who claimed his aid went from his door unassisted, if they had the smallest right to call upon him. If they did go away unhelped, it was simply because he had nothing to share with them. By nature he was full of generous impulses, and so, when grace came to be added to nature, he only felt the more deeply the truth of that saying of our Lord, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." If such men had the *ability* to give as well as the *will* to give, what a different aspect would be presented by the struggling Church of Christ! But God's gifts are divided, and to some He gives the ability without the will, and to others the will without the ability. "Continuing instant in prayer." In obe-

dience to this injunction, none but the Father, who seeth in secret, and unto whom all hearts are open, and all desires known, knows how often, in the retirement of the closet, and at stated hours of the day, he made known his requests, and sought the throne of grace. But here we may not enter, for the Divine command reads thus: "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." "Given to hospitality." How well, likewise, did he exemplify this Christian grace. Says the Apostle, in another place, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." If a clergyman, a stranger, chanced to be in town, and staying at one of our hotels, our brother no sooner heard of it than immediately, if it was possible for him, he "took him unto his own home." He was never more pleased than when, at church gatherings, he had his house filled with Christian friends, and one great regret with him for the loss of property was, that it denied him, to a great extent, the exercise of this most beautiful and

charming Christian grace. And thus, while he enjoyed life, and was usually very cheerful, he continued to look “not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

But I must retrace my steps somewhat, and take up the thread of his outer life where last I dropped it. I left him at St. Philip’s Church in 1852, its assistant minister, and doing and believing all that I have said. He continued there until the 1st of March, 1858, when he left, to become the Rector of St. Luke’s. His leaving St. Philip’s was one of the great trials of his life, as you may suppose ; but he met it under a strong sense of duty. There was no Episcopal church at that time in the eastern part of our city, and one seemed to be called for ; and no one could enter on such a work as building up a new church, and with the same prospects of success, as could the assistant minister of St. Philip’s. The Bishop of the Diocese, after careful consideration, advised him to the step ; and so, leaving all behind, and looking to that which was before him, he began his new work in a tem-

porary building, which is now occupied by the congregation of St. Mark's. And the record of his work among you, my brethren, from that day until Sunday, two weeks ago, when he put off his armor, is too familiar for me to rehearse it in detail. For nearly thirteen years he has been in and out before you, shrinking from no sacrifice ; neither sparing himself in any particular, if thereby he might win souls to Christ. You know how he not only gave himself, but was willing to give all that he had of worldly substance, to relieve this church of its pecuniary embarrassments. You remember how, for a time, he would receive nothing from you in the way of salary, because he would have all your ability turned towards the church building itself. Who of you does not know how nobly he met such difficulties and discouragements as would have made the hearts of most of us sink into despondency ? And all this while, as I have intimated already, he was receiving the most pressing invitations to take charge of large and wealthy congregations. Let it be remembered, to the honor and glory of Christ, that we have had among us, in these hard, self-seeking times, a man who, while repeat-

edly offered abundant support if he would go elsewhere, invariably answered no, and said he was ready to sell all that the war had left him, and take rooms, and live by the weekly offertory, if, thereby, this church could be freed from debt. No wonder that our whole community, almost, seemed to be at the grave of such a man last Tuesday. By so doing, it did itself honor, as well as him. And you most of all, as well you may, my dear brethren, now feel his loss and appreciate his labors. It has been a hard struggle with you, since the war, to live. I felt it would be, when, standing on this spot after the evacuation of the city by the Confederate forces, I saw the devouring fires sweep over this portion of the town and leave it a blackened desert. But faint not, be of good courage, for the memory of such a man as your rector must carry a blessing with it, as I trust you will find, not many days hence.

I come now to the last, sad, but triumphant chapter in your dear rector's life. Somewhat more than a year ago he had a most desperate illness, in which he almost descended into the very jaws of death. Almost by a miracle his life was spared to

us. On his convalescence, your affection made it possible for him to seek renewed health in the bracing air of the mountains at the North. He returned to you in the autumn, and, after a "silence of eight months," once more ministered from the chancel and the pulpit on the 6th of November last. As I write, I have before me the sermon which he preached on that occasion. It is full of earnestness and affection. He prays to be consecrated afresh to his Master's service, and to you. "And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel!" This was the text from which he spoke on that occasion. And the conclusion of that sermon runs in this wise: "My dear brethren," said he, "may God grant that the ministry renewed among you to-day may be full of Christ, a true witness ever to his person and work; and through the presence and grace of the Holy Spirit, may it be humbly instrumental in bringing his redeemed ones, by his cross and passion, through a holy walk here to the glory which He has purchased in heaven. For this, let us as a congregation unitedly pray, as we render thanks to God for his

goodness, and consecrate ourselves to his service."

Recovering, as he did, from so desperate an illness, and almost brought back from the grave by our prayers, many of us thought that a long and useful career was before him. Day by day, and month by month, his strength returned, and only within two or three weeks past he has been heard to say that he never felt better, and that some of the elasticity of his youth had come back to him. Feeling himself so much better, he undertook more work, and when remonstrated with about it, replied pleasantly, "What is the use of being a well man, if one cannot work?" Your vestry and yourselves, and those nearest to him, prayed him not to undertake quite so much, at least while the hot weather lasted; but he could not be persuaded, and felt that his increase of work was a duty. Since June he has been preaching twice on Sunday, together with instructing the children of the Sunday-school in the Creed. Whether or not this helped to prostrate him a second time, and that, too, after only seven months of seeming health, it is useless and more than idle for us to ask. On the last

Sunday morning, when he arose and prepared for service, he found the mainspring of his watch broken; and that was quite the case with the owner. Almost the entire machinery of life became suspended, and important organs of the body, by common consent, refused to discharge their functions. Ill as he felt himself to be, he nevertheless went through the services of the day. He very early realized that this was to be his last sickness, and he girded his soul accordingly for the encounter with the inevitable.

His mind was perfectly clear, and for several days he was free of pain. Not until near the close did physical distress fall upon him. His faith was firm, and when I first saw him he was not only calm, but cheerful. I think it would have been a great disappointment to him to have recovered. I am sure he would not, if he could, have exchanged his sick bed for the most robust health that any of us enjoy. I am convinced that he longed to depart and be with Christ. He told me on that first visit, which was necessarily brief, that he had drawn exceeding great comfort from the words, "If I go and prepare a place for you,

I will come again and receive you unto myself." "Especially," said he, "the words, 'I will receive you unto myself.'" He had been thinking, too, of the text on which he had preached on Sunday afternoon, and his last one, "Seeing Him who is invisible," and he had tried to form some conception of what death was, but could not, and dismissed it.

He asked me to come to him the next day, and administer the communion, and with that, and a fervent "God bless you" on his part and on mine, I left him. As night approached he became worse, and very restless, and expressed much anxiety to his friends lest he should not be able to partake of the communion the next day; and when I called late to learn how he was, and heard how much worse he had become, I thought that most likely on the next day, as one of his vestry said, he would drink of the new wine in his Father's kingdom, and be far beyond the sphere of sacraments. I went to him, however, the next morning, which was Sunday, at seven, and found him calm and collected, and anxiously awaiting me. His face beamed upon me as I approached

him, and when I quoted the words of our Lord, "With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer," he said, "Yes," but added, as if for him the communion, at that solemn hour, must be something more than fellowship, "I feel the need of all the grace I can obtain for my trial." People's religious culture and association must affect them in death as well as in life, and with us of the Anglican Church the Holy Communion is the crowning preparation for the passage from this world into the next; and our brother, in his desire to receive it, felt only as Hooker and Herbert did, and all the old worthies of the Church of England. He received with thankfulness and profound devotion, and as the high and holy service approached conclusion, and we all united in the Lord's Prayer, his voice was loud and clear, and especially and very deeply emphatic at the words, "Thy kingdom come." When we passed to the *Gloria in Excelsis*, I subdued my own voice so as that he might lead us all through that glorious hymn, and well did he bear his part, saying firmly and adoringly, with hands clasped and eyes raised: "We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor-

ship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty." I could not leave him immediately as the service ended, but waited a few moments, as he did not seem too much fatigued, and when I sat down beside him he said, "I am a poor sinner saved by grace;" and then a moment after he added, "My constant prayer is, 'Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.' I want to feel my feet on that Rock." I asked him what message I should bear from him to his brethren of the clergy, and without hesitation he said, "Tell them to serve Christ, to love Christ, and to preach Christ." It seemed to me as if he could not express himself too strongly, and that he could not find words enough to say all he felt in regard to that only name whereby we must be saved. I could not think of staying longer, but tore myself away. Steadily, and in spite of the most unflagging devotion on the part of his physicians, did he sink downward towards the grave, and when I saw him on Monday morning he was far advanced on the way to his heavenly home. I offered brief prayer for him, but he could not follow me, and in

a few hours more he had peacefully, and without a sigh, entered upon his inheritance. His face, as he lay robed in his surplice, carried no mark upon it of the recent physical distress, but seemed indicative of the "rest which remaineth for the people of God," it looked so placid in the last sleep.

And now his earthly part lies in yonder churchyard,¹ along with the sacred dust of kinsfolk and friends. The sweet hymn and the ponderous sound of the organ will come nigh his resting-place, but they will not wake him. He is far away in the bright and blessed country, and as Walton speaks of Herbert singing hymns in heaven with his friend Ferrar, so is our brother singing in paradise with Dehon, and Wallace, and Cobia, and Kaufman, and his uncle the Bishop, who lie around him; and with them, in due time, he shall have part in the first resurrection.

My brethren, I have spoken long, and yet I feel I have omitted far more than I have set down. I have spoken of his zeal and his self-sacrificing spirit; I have spoken of him as a preacher and a theologian; but I have told you little of his inner life, how he walked with God; what a man of prayer

¹ St. Philip's.

he was ; how full of the Holy Ghost he was ; how much he loved and reverenced the Word of God, and fed upon it. His outer life, which I have told you of, and which was known and read by you all, was but the visible sign of all this inward grace. He was *what* he was, because the Spirit of Christ dwelt in him richly, and filled him with love, and joy and peace in believing. But, imperfectly as I have spoken, I must come to an end, and where I have failed to set him before you, leave you to fill up the sketch. You will not soon forget him, or his abundant affection for, and deep interest in you. “Be ye also ready,” and let me be also ready, “for in such an hour as we think not, the Son of Man cometh.” May we all, brethren, follow him as he followed Christ, and meet him above, and with him spend a blessed eternity.

Bear with me a few moments more, and I will release you. Permit me to say, that one of our brother’s chiefest anxieties in life was the *debt* hanging over this church. It was a constant source of grief to him, and fear lest, after having been consecrated to God, it should be offered for sale, and so be lost to our Church ; and to avert so dire

a consummation, he stood ready to pledge every cent he had in the world. If such a thing had happened, I believe it would have broken his heart outright. Your vestry had recently been able to put a more cheerful face on matters, and to arrange for the debt satisfactorily, when suddenly, in the death of the rector, the heaviest blow fell on you ; for the whole arrangement was based on his being at the helm. But what, brethren, will you do now ? Will you pause, or will you go on ? If the memory of your rector is dear to you, as I know it is, you cannot let this church go from us without an effort ; you cannot let the auctioneer stand where *his* feet have stood for ten years, and sell to the highest bidder. You cannot let the sound of the mart be heard where his voice, now stilled in death, has spoken to you of the love of Jesus. Brethren, these walls must be his monument—this church must be a memorial church. It cannot be that a life such as his should leave no mark behind it. If this church is sold beyond our communion, let Charleston churchmen hang their heads for shame. Its debt should be paid for the honor of the dead, even if its doors be nailed up the next day, and you have to wait for more auspi-

cious times to reopen them. And we are all with you in this matter, and we mean, I trust, to make common cause with you, only you must lead the way. From all the pulpits of our churches in the city, our congregations will to-day be asked to come up to your help, and I do not believe the appeal will be made in vain. When men hear the story of our brother's life, and how he wrought, they will be sure to help you for his sake, and to avert so sad an ending as the sale of this church.

Be strong, then, and of good courage in this day of darkness, and God will strengthen your hands and establish your hearts. Go to your brother churchmen and fellow Christians, and say to them, Help us in our need. We mean to rear no marble column on which to write of the prowess of a military chieftain ; we do not ask you to help us tell in stone of the fame of the statesman : but we ask you to work together with us to preserve in our communion a memorial of one who was a good soldier of Jesus Christ, who fought a good fight, and for whom there is laid up a crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give him at the last day, and not to him only, but unto all who love his appearing. Amen !

EXTRACT FROM SERMON BY REV. A. T. PORTER.

“ You have keenly in your mind, I trust, a sense of the great loss which has befallen the Church especially, and the whole community in general. A good man is a great treasure to any people: his teaching, his example, his walk and conversation, his labors and his prayers are precious in God’s sight. We are so short-sighted, and so seldom appreciate our blessings until they are taken from us, that it is not common for us to make much of them that fear the Lord; but when the righteous perish, we wake up to the fact, and remember for a moment that a light has suddenly been put out. Our dear brother in the sacred ministry, who has so recently gone to his rest, was a striking illustration of one who pressed toward the mark. If there was one characteristic more prominent than another in his strongly marked character, so well known among us, it was that he had set the Lord Jesus Christ before himself as his all in all; in fact, it was the characteristic which toned his whole life. His devotion to the Saviour was that of intense and child-like love; he had utilized his faith, and his personal Lord was as a

present and near companion. He served Him because he loved Him : to exalt that Saviour, to magnify his grace and love, to impress the value and preciousness of his death and resurrection and continual intercession, to draw men to his feet, and to teach them to believe and love Him, all this was the one object of his life. Jesus was the theme of all his preaching. Jesus was the pattern of his life. Jesus concentered in Himself every hope and aspiration of his mind and heart and soul, in life and in death the same. Gifted with a mind of more than ordinary ability, with powers of extraordinary endurance, his zeal in every good work never flagged. Gadsden never thought of himself. Like his blessed Lord, if there was anything to be done, at whatever sacrifice, if he could further an enterprise or help a brother, he did not know how to say no. His utter unselfishness was one of the many beautiful traits of this godly man : differing materially with him in certain points of theology and in the administration of the Church, as some of us did, yet his large heart never allowed him to withhold his support and countenance from any brother, who needed his aid. And in a ministry of

seventeen years side by side, we have taken sweet counsel together, and walked in the house of God as friends. His clear head, sound judgment, and practical sense made him a man of extraordinary usefulness in all the positions he held. Only in the Church could men holding such different views have worked together in harmony and love. So long as we obey her rubrics and canons, and hold to her order, creed, and liturgy, her catholic system enables her children to strive as brethren in the great work of a world's conversion, though they may not find the current of their thoughts running always in the same channel ; and here she asserts her superiority to sectarianism.

“ Now our brother has gone ; his labors are forever over, his rest is permanent, his reward is sure. But being dead, he yet speaketh. Surely the example of such a life must give us renewed confidence in the strength and freeness of Divine grace. The traits which have called forth such a universal expression of admiration and affection, must stimulate us to emulate him. Who of us has not said, ‘ Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his ’ ?

Then, my brethren, like him, may we all set before us the Lord Christ. O, let us strive to realize more fully the awful nature of sin, and the countless price of that atonement which the only begotten Son of God has offered for us ; let us strive to understand how, as a prevailing intercessor, ' He ever liveth to make intercession for us.' Let us endeavor more and more to bring before our eyes the living, loving Christ ; touch Him, live for Him, follow Him, love Him, obey Him ! Then shall we, as our brother did, make sure of the prize, and prove the truth of our high calling in Christ Jesus."

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE IN THE GENERAL CONVENTION.

At the General Convention held in Baltimore, October, 1871, the following tribute was adopted, and remarks made.

The Rev. Dr. Pinckney, of South Carolina, said : —

Mr. President, I beg leave to offer the following resolution :

Resolved, That this House records upon its journal the sense of our loss in the death of the Rev. Christopher P. Gadsden, of the Diocese of South Carolina, whose high char-

acter and fervent spirit had endeared him to many hearts, and promised even longer usefulness in the Church of God.

He was one of the delegates to this Convention, sir, as well as a member of the last ; and, with the permission of the House, at the suggestion of a friend, I beg leave to insert the words “deputy elect to this Convention.”

The President. That amendment will be made.

The Rev. Dr. Pinckney, of South Carolina. Mr. President, I beg leave to add one word, while I offer to the House for its consideration this resolution.

My friend and brother had served one session with this General Convention, and I have been deeply gratified to find that his character and his love for Christ and the Church have been appreciated by many. We who have known him better in life can estimate more truly his value, and we lament more his loss. He was a man of elevated Christian character, a man of integrity, a man of truth. I have seldom on earth met one more endowed with those noble characteristics, open, honest, outspoken, without concealment, an honest and

upright man, whom every one felt that you could trust, and honor, and reverence, and love. His missionary zeal has been invaluable to us in our diocese, and in the depressed condition of our Church we sadly miss his wisdom, his energy, his earnestness, the fertility of his resources, which had proved invaluable to us in our diocesan difficulties and conferences. And, sir, that missionary zeal had impressed itself upon his character and upon his heart, and it secured for him the love and reverence of our whole people. I doubt whether any man has died in South Carolina more loved and more reverenced, and whose death has touched a greater number of hearts, in many, many years past. I have certainly never seen such crowds collected at any man's funeral since the burial of John C. Calhoun. And just before his death, prayer was offered for him by Christians of every name in that city, Protestant and Roman Catholic: all combined around his grave in one common testimony of affection, esteem, and regard.

Let me add one circumstance which shows how he had impressed himself upon the colored population of the South. He was an ardent advocate of preaching the gospel to

the colored race, and from his earliest ministry he had been zealously devoted to this purpose and object. A few days before his death, I met one of the colored leaders of the churches of Charleston, and he inquired after the health of our friend. I reported the physician's opinion of his case, and I felt deeply this man's answer. "Sir," said he, "God will spare, I trust, that minister of Christ. Last night our circles of prayer met, and we all agreed to pray for his valued life; and there were two thousand colored men last night, in this city, engaged in prayer for the restoration of his health and the prolongation of his life." I felt that his zeal, his diligence, his earnestness, had been appreciated by those to whom so much of his ministry had been devoted.

Mr. President, I think I can condense in a single sentence what struck me as his great characteristic. He was a faithful soldier and servant of Christ Jesus, and I have never met any Christian minister in this country or in England who seemed to me to embody more of the spirit of the baptismal vow. In his daily life and conduct and conversation, in the pulpit and out of it, in convention, diocesan or general, anywhere

and everywhere, he maintained that spirit of fidelity to Christ. The love of Christ constrained him. He was eminently a faithful soldier and servant of Christ Jesus unto his life's end ; and that end, as we would say, came prematurely. He was not forty-six years of age, and yet he had been twenty-five years in the Christian ministry, and had deeply stamped his earnest, energetic spirit upon the Church which he loved, and for which he labored.

Our friends from Pennsylvania have asked our expression of sympathy in the death of that venerable man, whom I remember well as one of the bulwarks and ornaments of this Convention. I fully sympathize with them in a sense of their loss, for that venerable gentleman had struck me as so remarkable for his Christian courtesy, and his manliness and honesty of character. But, sir, he was in ripe old age. He had run his course. He was ready to be gathered to his fathers. But this, our friend and brother, whose loss we now deplore, was in the very meridian of his days, and the fullness of his usefulness. He seems to us to have been prematurely called away ; but he had served God faithfully in his day, and

then he had lived already a long and useful life, and his death was like his life, full of love to his Master. I might fitly express the spirit in which he died by the lines which he made familiar to many hearts in our community, and which have already struck many a chord, namely, a verse written in his Bible many years since, composed by Dr. Valpy; and it breathes so beautifully the spirit of Christ, which was the spirit of his whole life and ministry, that I venture, even perhaps contrary to precedent, to repeat it here to you:

“ In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me ! ”

That was the spirit of his life—the spirit of his ministry; and I am sure my ministerial brethren will coincide with me when I say that it embodies the sum and substance, the life and the marrow, of the gospel message with which we are entrusted.

I move, sir, the adoption of this resolution which I have presented.

The Rev. Dr. Haight, of New York. I had not the good fortune to know our

reverend friend until the time of the last General Convention. At that time we were brought into contact more especially by our common interest in the missionary work of the Church among the Africans at the South. He came to me just before the last Convention to beg me to use my utmost influence, not to relax my own interest and my own efforts in that work, but to endeavor, if possible, to induce the Board of Missions to continue, and, if practicable, to make that work more efficient. He came to speak to me about the school in Charleston, which had been the object of very deep interest to that commission, and for which we had incurred very heavy responsibilities. I never can forget the simplicity and the earnestness and the wisdom of his words: and it was at my suggestion that he embodied what he had said to me, in a letter which was addressed to our commission, and was placed in the report of that year of the commission of Home Missions for Colored People; which was read by many with deepest interest, and no doubt contributed to the deepening of the feeling of the Board of Missions, that, notwithstanding the difficulties with which that mission had been en-

vironed, notwithstanding the apathy and the prejudice of the Church, North and South, that mission could not be relinquished with honor or with safety.

I was very much struck during the last General Convention with his course on this floor. There was something so manly, so noble, so entirely in accordance with the spirit of the wisest and the best men which this Church has ever seen, that I felt there was a man of power, intellectually and spiritually; that there was a man whose labors and whose prayers would never be wanting for the best interests of his Church.

No doubt, sir, we differed ecclesiastically and theologically, and, perhaps, in some respects widely; but he was one of those large-hearted and large-minded men, with whom I had no difficulty whatever in holding the sweetest converse, to whom I could unburden my own mind, feeling that I was talking to a friend, to a brother in Christ Jesus, one who I knew would never make a wrong use of what I said, in whose honor I could confide: and if this spirit could only prevail universally in this Church, of trust and confidence one in the other; if we could get rid of the miserable jealousies and sus-

pitions which abound, the position of this Church would at once rise gloriously in the sight of the world, and in the sight of our adorable Lord and Saviour.

I pray God that the spirit of that man may be the spirit of us all, in our several degrees. But few of us can hope to attain, miserable sinners as we are, to the height of spirituality to which he attained ; but few of us can hope to leave the record which he has left of perfect sincerity, of undoubting faith, of holy obedience ; and God give us grace in our measures, in our lot, to follow him, though at great distance, even as he followed Christ and the holy Apostles.

Mr. McCrady, of South Carolina. Mr. President, it would not be well that the voice of the laity should not be heard, from the Diocese of South Carolina, and I shall say but a few words. What I shall say will not be in the form of eulogy, but I will leave what I know he has done to speak for itself. I will not tell about his ministry ; I will not tell about his faith, his integrity, his courage ; but I will say this : when, after the war, we were many of us destitute, his church found itself in debt, with a decree against it for sale to pay the debt. A long

friendship had existed between the reverend gentleman and myself, although he was much my junior ; and he came to me and stated what he was worth, showed me all that he had, and said all must go to save that church ; and he put it at my disposal at a time when what he had was not worth half as much as it was in former times. I took it, and told him I would do the best I could, but he must leave it to me. He did leave it to me, and I did my best. I trust that something may be saved to him. I trust that efforts are now making, poor as we are in the city of Charleston, to save him from loss on account of that church. But he was willing to give everything, so much as he possessed of worldly goods.

He was a man devoted to his opinions. I had a test of this, on one occasion, when he was assistant minister to St. Philip's Church ; on a visit to him we were talking about the Prayer Book, to which he was devotedly attached, and which he reverenced, and it was because of his reverence and attachment to it that he listened to what I had to say. I pointed out to him one word which I told him I could never use in the Prayer Book. He promptly said that he

would not change a word, and said it in a decided manner and with much temper, as I thought at the time, so that I said not another word. A year afterwards, on board of a steamboat, Mr. Gadsden said to me, “Mr. McCrady, I have never been able to use that word, since you spoke to me, as I did before ; can we not change it ? Why don’t you make some effort to change it ?” I said that, as I thought, there were no opportunities.

In 1862, when the Church sat in council for the Southern States, there was a great desire to revise the Prayer Book, and it finally was committed to three Bishops chosen by the House of Bishops, three Presbyters chosen by the House of Delegates, and three laymen ; I was one of the latter. That commission had but one meeting. At that meeting, to my surprise, the first letter that I remember to have opened was a letter from Gadsden, directed to the Bishop who was presiding, Bishop Elliott, calling his attention to the very word, and asking that that might be changed, and referring to myself as having suggested it to him.

Now, Mr. President and gentlemen, this is difficult to conceive by those who knew

Mr. Gadsden well, who knew that he would part with every dollar he had, sooner than he would part with his opinions ; and yet that gentleman had the courage and the generosity, through pure conviction, to be willing to do that. Let me say, however, that I believe when he came here and sat in 1868, nothing would have induced him to change a word in that Prayer Book. I think he then thought — and it was from the result of conversation with him that I say so — that there was too much effort then making to make alterations in the Prayer Book, and that it must lead to trouble. He had, therefore, made up his mind to take it just as it was, and on no account to make an alteration. I say this in justice to him who cannot speak for himself, who I know would have said that here, if he could have been present and had heard what I have now related.

Mr. President, I have not a word of eulogy to pronounce ; I am but a poor eulogist ; but if what I have related does not speak for him, no language would give utterance to that which ought to be said.

The resolution was agreed to unanimously by a rising vote.

II.

TRIBUTES FROM BRETHREN OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

BY REV. E. T. WINKLER, D. D., PASTOR CITADEL
SQUARE BAPTIST CHURCH.

AT the close of a sermon on “The Kingdom of God” (Romans xiv. 17), the Rev. E. T. Winkler, D. D., Pastor of the Citadel Square Baptist Church, made the following allusion to the recent death of Rev. C. P. Gadsden:—

“The Kingdom of God ! blessed association to which all true Christians belong ; sacred, imperishable union of all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity ; how the revelation cheers amid earth’s losses ! how potently it soothes the sense of public bereavement which has possessed our hearts for the last fortnight, and which to many a considerate and grateful spirit would have otherwise cast a dreary shadow upon the festivities of the Lord’s Day ! Who of us has not mourned the withdrawal from our community of an influence that has been felt

for good in every social and religious circle ? The Episcopal Church, honored as he was among its dioceses, had no exclusive claim to Mr. Gadsden. Around his dying bed, that scene of triumph in his quiet home ; beside that mournful couch attended by its loving watchers, the sympathies of the whole city and the whole State gathered ; and when he departed, who of us did not feel as if something that had made life sweeter and better had ceased to be ? Who did not grieve for the manly form that had perished in its prime ; for the noble spirit that had passed away from its fields of usefulness ; for the wise and generous counsel henceforth silent in the place of Christian communion ; for the bright and honored and cheering example so soon absorbed into the pure light whence it came ?

“ As for myself, I have no special right either to speak of him or for him. It was a mere coincidence that we came to Charleston, for official service, in the same year. Since that time I have enjoyed no privilege of association with him, save what was possessed by other evangelical ministers of the city, who frequently united with him in the advocacy of the general religious interests

of the community, and in prayers for the world-wide success of Christ's cause. And yet the coincidence, and all the genial and inspiring circumstances of that long association, may justify the expression of a tender grief that such a discrimination has been made by the inscrutable providence of the Almighty, and that such a man has been taken away. Ah ! if he were here, how much more potently could he speak of Christ and his salvation, amid the enhanced reverence and affection of the people ! and how greatly we need such potent speech !

“ But let us not mourn for the pious dead. Let us rather render a tribute of solemn gratitude to God for such men. Let us cherish a sense of pious obligation to remember their words and follow their footsteps. They have been summoned from the dying chamber and the gloomy grave to the shining fields of immortality. They were kings in exile here ; they are now kings enthroned. From their radiant seats they regard us, they call to us : and Jesus also looks and summons, from the central throne. Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay

aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."

BY REV. W. H. ADAMS, PASTOR CIRCULAR (CONGREGATIONAL) CHURCH.

The Conclusion of a Discourse preached by the Rev. W. H. Adams, Pastor of the Circular Church, Charleston, S. C., July 30, 1871, commemorative of the Rev. Christopher P. Gadsden, late Rector of St. Luke's (Episcopal) Church.

"I have glorified Thee on the earth : I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." — JOHN xvii. 4.

These are the meditations which, the past week, have proved strong consolation in the sudden bereavement of an entire community, of a faithful pastor, a beloved brother in the ministry of reconciliation.

On this, the first Sabbath in heaven of the Rev. Christopher P. Gadsden, his friend, the Assistant Bishop elect, will doubtless present to that mourning congregation his portrayal of his character, history, and distinguished services for Christ. But it is a grateful duty to the memory of one whose blest ministry has not been circumscribed by denominational lines, that a minister of

another communion, honored by an intimate acquaintanceship with the departed, should bear testimony that not in his pastorate and sect alone, but in all his walk and conversation, he glorified God on the earth, and has now finished the work He gave him to do.

It has been the privilege of the speaker once each week, as a rule, for more than four years, to meet in familiar Christian intercourse this now translated minister. On Monday noon, some of the evangelical ministers of the city have been accustomed to assemble for prayer and conference. After a half-hour of devotional exercises, a subject previously selected, and usually relating to experimental religion, is freely discussed. It was here that he specially endeared himself to his brethren. Here, in the freedom of fraternal intercourse, his true character was displayed. Here it specially appeared that he glorified God in the entire consecration of his highly cultivated faculties and his whole heart to the honor of his Saviour. To Him all his conversation tended. We could almost invariably anticipate the nature of his remarks; however varied the illustrations, however extensive his citation of authorities, Christ was his one theme.

Was the question, “The best practical methods of increasing the holiness of the Church ;” we knew that he would advise that ministers should themselves draw nearer to Christ, and preach Christ more fully and persuasively. If “Ministerial training” were considered, he would certainly argue that the primary essential was for the candidate to be found in Christ, and to pervade all his studies and life with the spirit of Christ. On one occasion, in remarking on the subject “What is comprehended in saving truth ?” he closed an earnest exhortation to “make Christ the main theme of our discourses,” with the words, accompanied by his genial smile, “In brief, I think that all truth is saving truth which, with one arm around the cross, you can touch with the other.”

No narrow or sectarian remark ever fell from his lips in that meeting. While ever professing his firm adherence to the communion of which he was a minister, he yet maintained that he loved the Church Universal more. The catholicity of his spirit was the tenacious bond which drew and indissolubly united to him the hearts of brethren of other denominations, as well as his

own. For several months past, these meetings have been held by kind agreement of brethren, at my own study. Occasionally, by reason of ministerial engagements, there would be present none but Bro. Gadsden, and at times even he was compulsorily absent. Those seasons of intercommunion with himself alone will be ever memorable among life's rarest privileges. On one occasion, after an hour's converse on Christian union, he, as usual, proposed prayer before parting. So deep was the impression made by his heavenly-mindedness in these supplications, that on the following day I portrayed it to my people. Among his petitions, he pleaded: "Let not this meeting be discontinued. Let it continue a little fountain springing up in the midst of the week's care, which shall invigorate us for more active and self-denying toil in our Master's service."

It was my happiness last summer to meet him in New York, returning from the White Mountains, where his health had been confirmed, and to project an excursion up the Hudson River to West Point. As we sat upon deck, he related with fervent tones, as strong as before his severe illness, his recog-

nition of a gracious Providence in his recovery. He stated that while being brought down from his sick-room in the arms of friends, to be taken to Somerville as a last resort, he was greeted by a hymn sung by the Sunday-school Convention then in session at Trinity Methodist Church, diagonally opposite his residence. He was afterwards told that that hymn succeeded a prayer offered by the Convention for his recovery. On the way to the depot he felt the current of his disease receive a check, and from that moment his recovery began. He then gratefully acknowledged God as the hearer of prayer, and the fulfillment of the promise, "Before they call will I answer, and while they are yet speaking will I hear."

On being rejoined to his people he preached a sermon, a printed copy of which he placed on my study-table with the modest remark that "it had been published not for any intrinsic merit, but as commemorative of his restoration to his people." But this discourse, the last he ever published, contains his creed. Here the secret of his consistent walk with God, and his successful ministry, is clearly announced. In entreating his people's prayers for his resumed min-

istry, he selected Paul's request to the Ephesians : " And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." (Eph. vi. 19.) In the sermon occurs the following passage, suggesting the subjects of his people's petitions for their pastor : " An outspoken rebuke of sin and unbelief ; a steady lifting up of Christ as the atonement and righteousness of the guilty ; a direct invitation to Him as the only hope of the lost ; a courageous cleaving to inspired Scripture in all its breadth and depth, in the face of cavilers and gainsayers ; with an acknowledged dependence in all things upon the grace of the Holy Ghost, — for this I would pray, and ask your constant supplications to Almighty God, as most necessary for an efficient ministry and a living Church." I cannot refrain from quoting from the close of this discourse, which is a noble and befitting monument to his whole ministry ; and by these solemn words to-day, he, though dead, yet speaketh : —

" As a preacher of the gospel, I am commanded to glory in the cross ; standing at its foot, I am to point you to the finished

redemption accomplished thereon. I am to direct the eye of faith to the enthroned Saviour, pleading as our great High Priest within the veil, and bid you with all your heart to trust in Him, and realize your present acceptance in the Beloved, your justification as you 'look by faith unto Jesus,' and your eternal security as, united to Him through the new birth of the Spirit, and incorporated with Him by the Holy Ghost dwelling in you, you are 'kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.'

"To every convicted sinner who 'trembling' asks, 'What must I do to be saved?' I am to make the all-sufficient answer, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' To all 'passing by,' however thoughtless they may be of their souls and the eternity which is before them, I must cry (and O! that the Spirit of God may make the words potent!), 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' I must invite with that most tender and attractive call of the Master, 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' "

And then he continues, until he has cir-

cumscribed the entire circle of faithful invitation and warning, in pleading with sinners to "flee from the wrath to come." Would that this sermon were in the possession of all who knew and loved him! They could not have a more adequate memorial.

Last Sabbath morning, as he lay on the confines of eternity, in my deep sorrow I opened a favorite book of his, which, impressed by the frequency of his allusions to it, I had borrowed from him. It was a copy of that sacred classic, "Rutherford's Letters," rendered especially attractive because filled with his own pencilings. You can realize the depth of feeling sounded, as my eye fell upon these words of Rutherford, underscored by Brother Gadsden: "*There is nothing out of Heaven, next to Christ, dearer to me than my ministry.*" Yes, that ministry, which he was about to leave for that only dearer object, his Saviour, had received his every glad energy; had evoked all the possibilities of his consecrated being. Perhaps it was while recovering from sickness a year since, that he marked the following passage: "Lord, give me submission to wait on. My heart is sad that my

days flee away, and I do no service to my Lord in his house, now when his harvest and the souls of perishing people require it ; but his ways are not like my ways, neither can I find Him out. . . . O that I might preach his beauty and glory, as once I did, before my clay-tent be removed to darkness ; and that I might lift Christ off the ground, and my branches might be watered with the dew of God, and my joy in his work might grow green again, and bud and send out a flower.” This is the last passage marked by his pencil, in the volume. If we are known by our favorite authors, as by our companions, his character is clearly evinced not only by his admiration of “the holy Rutherford,” but also in that this author’s longing for the salvation of souls, and his most rapturous breathings after Christ and his precious love, are the passages he has the most frequently and uniformly marked. Of the former, take this : “O if [that] I could buy your soul’s salvation with any suffering whatever, that ye and I might meet with joy up in the rainbow, when we shall stand before one Judge !” and of the latter, this : “I resolve to wrestle with Christ ere I quit Him. But my love to

Him hath casten my soul into a fever, and there is no cooling of my fever till I get possession of Christ. O strong, strong love of Jesus, thou hast wounded my heart with thine arrows ! O pain ! O pain of love for Christ ! Who will help me to praise ? ”

Ah, now that pain is quelled, in its measureless increase ; and his more than angelic praises are helped by the voices of harpers harping on their harps unto the Lamb that was slain.

My friends, to ourselves, as well as to his charge and to this community, God is solemnly speaking in this our great sorrow. Let us take heed that we be also ready. Let us also be encouraged. Henceforth let it be our meat to do our Heavenly Father’s will, that if suddenly the Master should come and call us from earth, we may be able to reply, as could our beloved, lamented, redeemed friend : —

“ I have glorified thee on the earth. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”

BY REV. CHAS. S. VEDDER, PASTOR OF THE
HUGUENOT CHURCH.

The following is an extract from a sermon

preached by Rev. C. S. Vedder, at the Huguenot Church, Charleston, S. C., from the text, "I will give you rest," Matt. xi. 28.

"The last public address of that great-hearted and beloved minister of Christ, who entered into rest during the past week, was upon the closing words of the Apostle's Creed, 'life everlasting.' He told the children of his Sabbath-school what life is: that natural life is the breath of God, and spiritual life the breath of the Holy Ghost. Time not then permitting, he promised to speak to them, the next Sabbath, upon the word 'everlasting.' The next Sabbath came—he did not. But, from his bed of sickness, he sent them word that if he had spoken to them of everlasting life, it would have been to tell them that we could know nothing of it until we enter upon it, and that now he was going to see what mortal eye had not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived. And he *has* gone! From the work to which he gave himself with such self-sacrificing devotion, he has been called to enter into the joy of his Lord, leaving the savor of a name which is 'as ointment poured forth,' and the memory of words which will speak long, long after the lips

which uttered them have been mute and motionless to earth forever ! He realizes, in its fullness, the promise, ' I will give you rest ' ! "

BY REV. J. T. WIGHTMAN.

The following is the substance of a tribute to the Rev. C. P. Gadsden, delivered on the Sabbath following his death, from the text, " For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain " (Phil. i. 21), at Spring Street Church (Methodist Episcopal Church, South), by the pastor, Rev. J. T. Wightman.

" This day is a day of mourning. The city is clothed in sackcloth. A good and great man has fallen. The beloved Gadsden is no more. His church is draped in mourning, and the altar at which he faithfully ministered is bathed in the tears of his devoted people. It is not in my recollection that mourning was ever so widespread in this city at the death of a citizen. All unite in the common grief, without distinction of class or denomination. It would seem as if almost any one else could have been better given up. My lonely spirit cries out, ' Would to God I had died for thee ! '

" He was lovely in spirit, exalted in views,

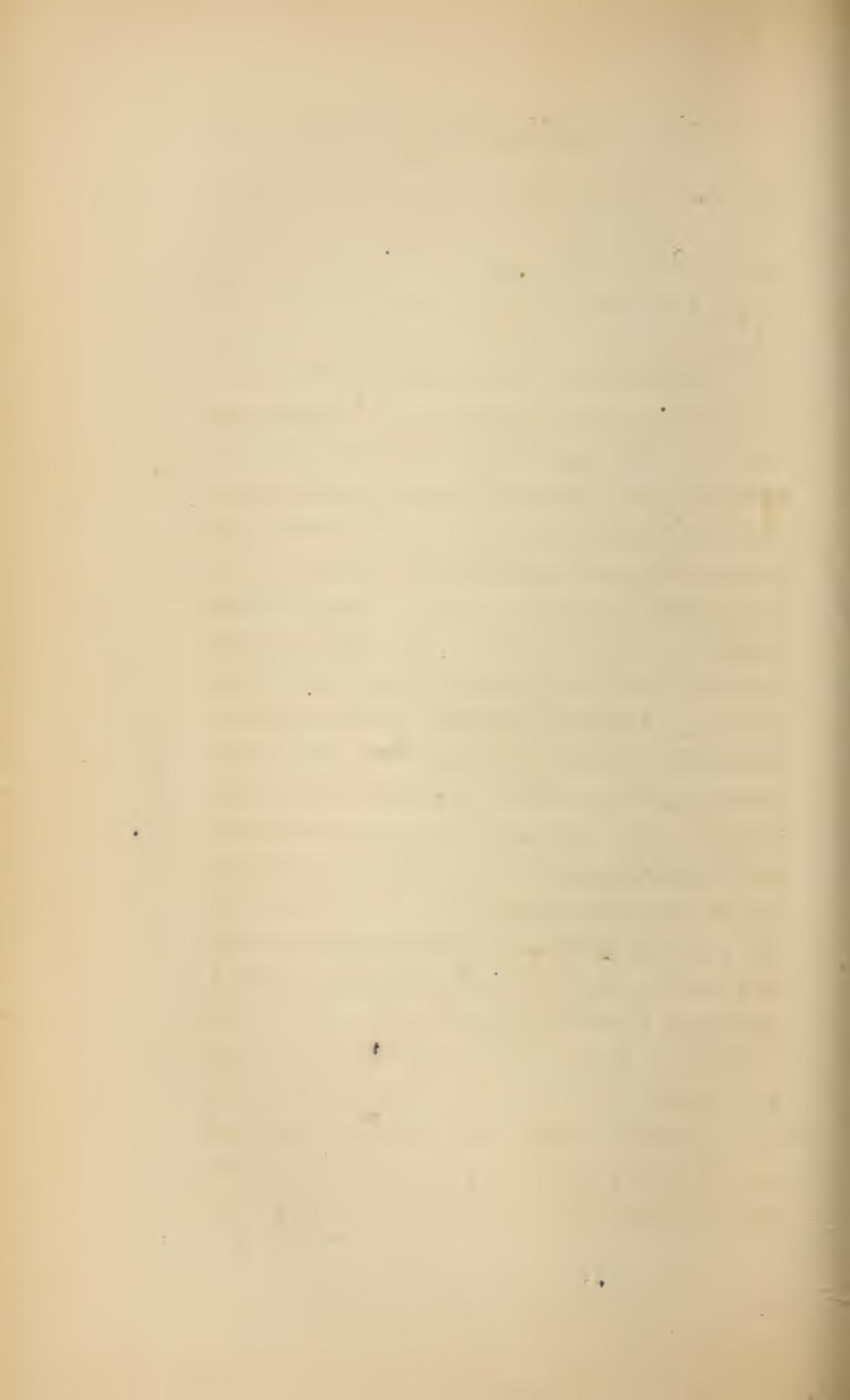
ardent in piety, and he stood in the front rank of every movement which advanced the kingdom of Christ. His broad and catholic spirit rose above barriers which circumscribe the charity and labor of most men, and bore him ‘everywhere doing good to all men.’ The Bible Society, the Young Men’s Christian Association, the Orphan House, the Confederate Widows’ House, the Missionary, the Tract, the Sunday-school work, every enterprise which looked to the elevation of the intellectual and moral *status* of the community, received new vigor from his counsels, and new beauty from his sympathies. His heart was an affluent fountain from which perpetual streams flowed forth to nourish the roots of every good word and work.

“ He was a man held in universal respect, All loved him. I loved him as a brother. We now recall with chastened admiration his manly patriotism in upholding the city with faith and prayer during the darkest and heaviest night of his country’s struggle. But especially does his character shine in its brightest aspect under the light of the cross.

“ His earnest, pointed, and Christ-filled

sermons ; his ardent, agonizing, faith-illuminated prayer ; his broad, noble, heaven-expanded views ; his temper, charity, works ; all, all have left us an example worthy of imitation. Who does not wish to possess his docile, humble, and sweet spirit ?

“ But his work is done. ‘ A bright and shining light ’ has gone out in his church. But thanks be unto the Father of all mercies, he died in triumph, and has left a bright example to the Church of the power of the Son of God to support a soul in the passage of death. Several days before his departure his mind was profoundly impressed with the chapter from which the text is taken. His life and his death are beautiful comments on that chapter, by manifesting the spirit of the holy Apostle, ‘ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.’ I speak for the denomination which I represent ; our sympathy goes forth for the smitten flock and family, and to the God of all grace we commend them in prayer.”



III.

FUNERAL CEREMONIES, ETC.

A SKETCH OF THE CEREMONIES ATTENDING THE BURIAL OF MR. GADSDEN.

THE services over the remains of this beloved minister were performed at St. Luke's Church, of which he was pastor, on yesterday afternoon at five o'clock. The public, by their number, their deportment, and the solemnity of their bearing, gave evidence of their consciousness that a sudden and heavy bereavement had befallen themselves and their city ; and along the streets through which the funeral cortege passed with its sacred burden, the general grief was manifested in a most striking manner, which has been seldom witnessed unless upon the death of the most conspicuous, most distinguished, and most revered of our citizens. The body was borne by the vestry and wardens into the edifice which he had aided in founding, and to the ministrations in which he had consecrated a great part of the most active period of his life, which now was draped in

mourning, and was likewise thronged and overcrowded by a vast concourse composed of persons of every race, class, and denomination in our city. Every one seemed desirous of testifying by his presence to the zeal, ability, and faithfulness with which this man of God had sought to perform the duties of life. He had ever been accessible to all — kind, friendly, and compassionate alike to rich and poor ; he had ever been ready to take his part in every good and useful work, and the people desired to show their appreciation of the man and the Christian.

His clerical brethren, from every denomination, whom he had always been ready to aid and to coöperate with in the common service of their Master, were also gathered together on this solemn occasion. The presence of the children of the Sunday-school, who were seated around the chancel, gave an additional interest to the scene within the church. Their hearts seemed touched with the tender recollections of him who so often, so earnestly, yet always with pleasant manner, had taught them from that spot where his lifeless body now lay, and they made no effort to restrain their emo-

tions whilst they looked upon his bier. The impressive services of the Episcopal Church were conducted by the Rev. Messrs. Pinckney, Prentiss, Elliott, and Howe, whilst several other ministers, some of whom had come for the purpose from their distant homes, were present in the chancel.

After the ceremonies at St. Luke's, the body was removed to the burial ground of St. Philip's Church, where it was interred amid the chanting of hymns, in which every one united. Wreaths of flowers, crosses, and garlands were deposited by his nearest friends of the clergy, and by the immediate family of the deceased, upon the newly made grave, and the benediction was pronounced by a reverend brother. Thus terminated ceremonies which, from the beginning to the end, were peculiarly impressive, from the sincere affection and regard which were so universally entertained for him whose body had been placed in its last resting-place. This was close by the church in which he had been baptized, had been consecrated to the service of his Maker, and had acted as assistant minister for five years; it was within reach of the sounds of the swelling organ, and now, when the choral music

and the voices of the morning and the evening hymns shall be wafted on the air, they shall be borne over his tomb, but will fall upon “the dull, cold ear of death,” and will awake henceforward no responsive note of praise from the lips of him whom, when alive, melodious anthems and songs of prayer had power to stir with sacred rapture.

As the only surviving classmate of Mr. Gadsden in this city, and connected with his church from the inception of the enterprise which built it, it may be permitted us to state, that at the early period of his college life he was conspicuous for his great reverence for religion, and his earnest and consistent piety; and as an incident in his career, that it was his habit to have prayers, and to listen to, or himself to read a sermon in his rooms during every Sabbath evening; on which occasions a few of his friends were invited to be present. His fellow-students, without exception, entertained a profound respect, both for his attainments, and his high moral qualities. He graduated with distinction in a large class, and he was considered one of the best orators among his then associates. We only repeat what

others have so well expressed, when we add in conclusion, that his life since has been one of unselfish devotion to the requirements of his calling ; to serve his Master, to convert souls, to minister to the wants, spiritual and temporal, of his fellow-man ; these were his greatest pleasures, for to such duties he had consecrated his time on earth. His life has been a toilsome one, and not without its trials ; but it is not surprising that, with aims like these, a man of so unselfish a nature — gifted with talents and with irrepressible energy, displayed in whatever concerned the welfare of the Church — should attain so high a rank in that in which he worshipped and labored, as to have recently received the support of a majority of his order for the highest, most responsible, and most sacred gift it was in their power to aid in conferring.

Mr. Gadsden belonged to a family which has been distinguished for its patriotism, and for its civic and social virtues. He also greatly loved the people of his native State and city, and he was willing at all times cheerfully to sacrifice his interests, his property, his life even, for their benefit. He has done this ; and we doubt not that he is

now reaping those blessed and more enduring rewards which his Heavenly Father and Saviour has in store for a faithful servant. What we can do, now that he is dead, is to show that we appreciate the labors and the example derived from a review of the life of one who was the friend of all who needed the aid of a minister of God ; and more especially we can exhibit this practically by perfecting the plans which we know were those most dear to his heart.

F. P. P.

COPY OF RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE VESTRY
OF ST. LUKE'S CHURCH.

At a special meeting of the Vestry of St. Luke's Church, Charleston, held on the 27th July, 1871, the following proceedings were unanimously adopted : —

Vain would be the effort to depict the depth and poignancy of that affliction which rests upon the congregation of St. Luke's Church ; futile the attempt to give adequate expression to the emotions which swell each bosom, and bow each head with a grief too deep for utterance.

In the prime of life ; in the active discharge of ministerial and social duties ; with

an intellect gifted, cultivated, and refined ; a mind stored with the attainments of the scholar and the theologian ; an imagination fervid, chaste, and captivating ; a fluency and felicity of expression of the highest order ; a heart tender, loving, and overflowing with sympathy in the joys and sorrows of others ; a disposition gentle, kind, amiable, and winning ; all consecrated to the glory of God, in the salvation of man ; all purified and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and rendered meet for the Master's service. Such was the Christian pastor ; such the faithful shepherd, whom "the Lord gave, and " whom "the Lord hath taken away."

Early called to preach "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," the last summons found him (in response to prayer) with armor on, still battling under the "banner of the cross," against "the world, the flesh, and the devil."

The fight fought, the course finished, the faith kept ! His the crown, his the life-sought welcome : "Well done, good and faithful servant ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord !"

Priceless the privileges of such a ministry ; incalculable its loss ; deep the respon-

sibilities which rest upon each member of that favored fold !

Feebly, yet affectionately, and in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, would we record our sense of this dispensation of his mysterious, yet all-wise providence. Therefore —

Resolved, That in the removal of the late Rev. Christopher P. Gadsden from the scenes of his earthly labors, to that "place prepared" in his "Father's house," "to the whole company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect," the Church militant has been deprived of one of her ablest champions, one of her brightest ornaments, and most zealous heralds of the cross.

Resolved, That to the congregation of St. Luke's Church, it is the severance of the tenderest earthly ties which can bind a devoted, zealous, and faithful pastor to a favored, loving, and grateful people.

Resolved, That as emblematic of our deep bereavement, and as a token of reverence and affection for the memory of its late rector, St. Luke's Church be draped in mourning for the space of six months.

Resolved, That the Rev. W. B. W. Howe, Assistant Bishop elect, be respectfully requested to officiate at St. Luke's Church, on Sunday morning next, and on that occasion to deliver a discourse in consonance with the mournful circumstances under which the congregation will then be assembled.

Resolved, That to the bereaved widow and children of our late rector, a copy of these proceedings be

transmitted, with the heartfelt assurance that we mourn with and for them, for ourselves, and for our children. (Monthly Record, August, 1871.)

TO THE MEMORY OF REV. C. P. GADSDEN,
RECTOR OF ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, CHARLESTON,
S. C.

“ It matters little at what hour of the day
The righteous falls asleep. To him
Death cannot come untimely who is fit to die !
The less of this cold world, the more of heaven ;
The briefer life, the earlier immortality ! ”

Back to your fount of feeling, tears and sighs !
Nor sighs nor tears are known above the skies !
The star-gemmed canopy of yonder world
Resounds with joyous tones, as, wide unfurled,
“ The banner of the cross ” waves high and bright
Before the wond’ring stranger’s ravished sight ;
His rapture cannot e’er be told,
To find his name thereon enrolled !

O ! ’tis a privilege to die the Christian’s death ;
To testify confiding hope with dying breath ;
To leave for stricken, mourning hearts a balm
To sooth the deepest grief with holy calm ;
To place in memory’s casket the blest hour
When Faith o’ercame the tyrant’s dreaded power !

But blessed, thrice blessed to lay life down
And wear in heaven the pastor’s crown !

To find whole hosts around him throng,
Singing his praise who had so long
With zeal untiring, faithfulness, and love,
Pointed their souls to glorious realms above ;
Who joyed in all their joys, and ever kept
A sympathetic tear for those who wept !

A Christian's death ! Who does not yearn
A lesson from its scenes to learn ?
But O ! to hear a minister's farewell ;
To listen to his church's funeral knell ;
To feel assured while sad we stand
Around his grave, he, in the land
Of everlasting rest, is reaping now
The rich reward of holy act and vow ;
To think we almost catch th' Archangel's strain,
" Soldier of the cross, well done ! Not in vain
Hast thou in the world dwelt ! " This were to know
The blessedness of mingled joy and woe !

But from these thoughts we turn ; on earth are tears,
And loneliness, and dread of future cares.
In heaven one universal hymn of thankful praise
Reéchoes through the azure vault where cherubs raise
Their infant notes in glad hosannas, as they see
Him crowned, by Christ himself, with immortality !

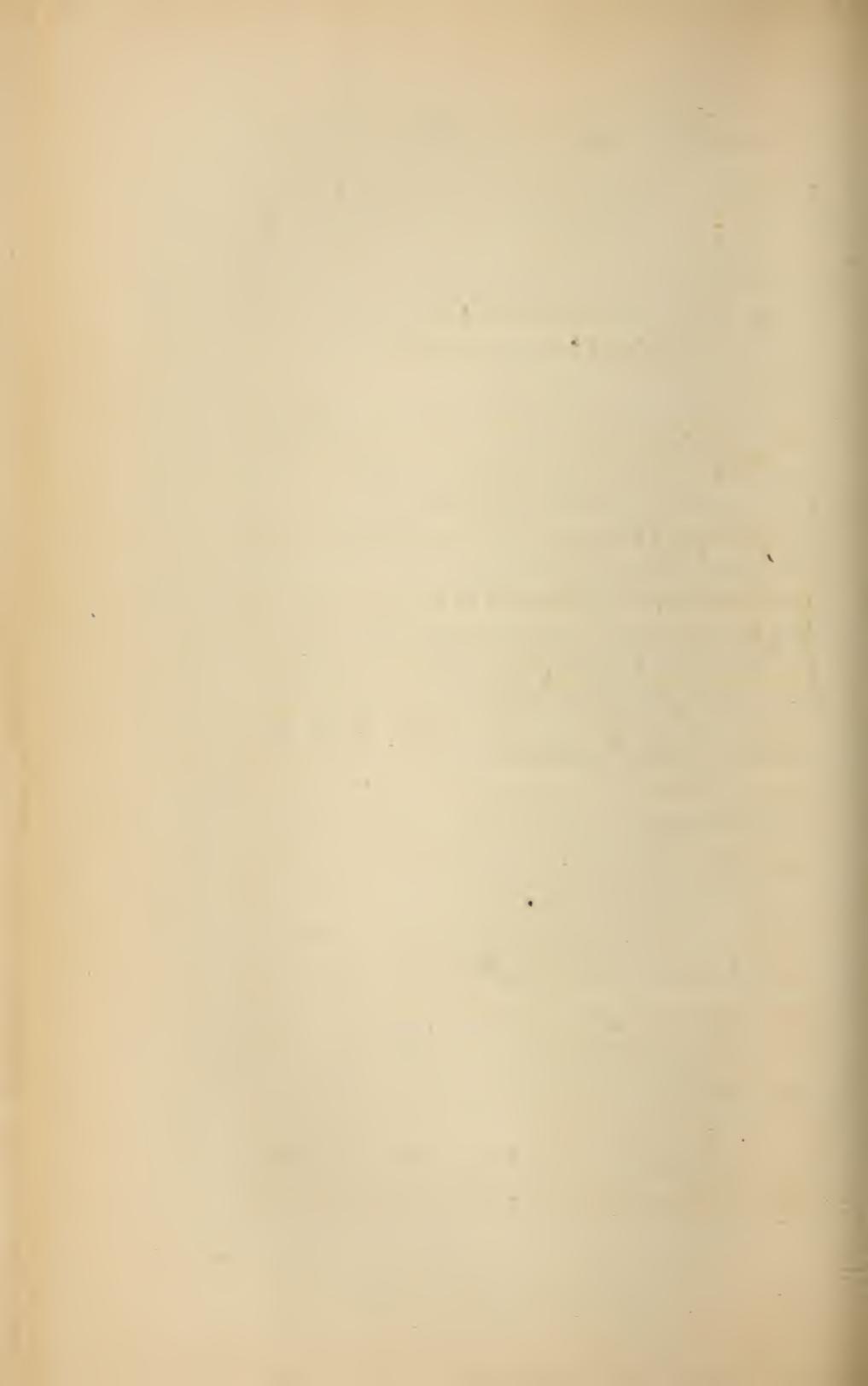
And shall the upper sanctuary ring
With joy, and we on earth no praises bring
To Him who hath vouchsafed to us the precious
boon
Of this beloved friend, and mourn that all too soon
He has been called away from church and home ;
And we, who cherished, should be left to roam

Along life's pathway, all desolate and alone ?
No, no ! He cannot die too soon, whose work is
done !

He cannot wear too soon the diadem,
By Christ prepared, of gold and costly gem ;
Yes, yes, in that bright sphere it now
Rests on his calmly placid brow !
O ! who would have it laid aside,
Or wish again he had not died ?
Back then, ye tears — back then, ye sighs !
From earth's heart-sorrows let thought rise,
Soaring beyond the stars to join the throng
Who praise Jehovah in rapturous song.
Then let it be our aim like him to live,
And win the crown our Saviour has to give
To those whose faithfulness and love
Have won a place in realms above !

M. T. G.

SUMMERTON, S. C., 28th July, 1871.



IV.

SERMONS,
BY REV. C. P. GADSDEN.

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE GUIDE TO A
TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF THE
SCRIPTURES.

“Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.” — 1 JOHN ii. 20.

IGNORANCE of God, with inability, by any powers of our own, to apprehend Him, is a part of the curse which has overtaken sinful men. The gospel of Jesus Christ, however, assures every believing heart, “that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true.” “God hath spoken to us,” by one “who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.” But “the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.” How ignorant were the nations, both Jew and Gentile, of the glory of the only begotten of the Father, “when He dwelt among them!” It was not until the Holy Ghost descended, on the Day of Pentecost,

that even the apostles had correct views of the person and work of their Divine Master. And what is evident, from the historical record, in regard to the Word Incarnate, has, throughout the ages, been true of the written Word. It is indeed, my brethren, "a light shining in a dark place ;" and "the eyes of our understanding must be opened," by Divine grace, before we shall recognize its brilliancy, and be guided in the sheen of its splendor, to God. Hence it is that David prays, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of thy law ;" "make me to understand the way of thy precepts."

The subject to which I would invite attention this morning is, "The Holy Spirit the Guide to a true Understanding of the Holy Scriptures."

And in considering a fact so important, and the knowledge of which is so essential to the salvation of the soul, I ask you, my hearers, to unite with me in the prayer that the Divine Sanctifier may "cast his bright beams of light" upon us, and breathe into our hearts the holy influences of his grace.

With paths of knowledge to be explored on all sides, the Church and the world cry

out for an infallible guide. And there are those who, overlooking the presence of the promised Teacher, are casting themselves upon human helps. Some follow blindly the traditions of men; and even acknowledge the blasphemous pretensions of him “who, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” Others, with heedless self-will, fulfill another inspired prophecy, and “speak great swelling words of vanity, promising liberty, while they themselves are the servants of corruption.” But it is neither from the uncertainty of tradition, the modern dogmas of the Papacy, or the self-confident speculations of rationalism, that aid is to be brought for the ignorance of man. The inspired Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the only secure basis of religious belief; and the Church, “although a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ,” must, in her individual members, as well as in her catholic unity, be irradiated with the light of the Holy Spirit, in order to “have a right judgment in all things,” and to “embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life.”

With the profoundest reverence we rec-

ognize "the ministration of the Spirit" as a living power in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. And when, in obedience to the command of our Lord, we "search the Scriptures" with faith and prayer, we claim his parting promise to his disciples: "I will send unto you from the Father the Spirit of truth;" "He shall testify of me;" "when He is come, He will guide you into all truth."

Now should any affirm that this testimony is confined to the letter of Scripture, and that the promise of Christ was exhausted in the gift of that inspiration by which "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" or that it was intended only for the guidance of the Church, when speaking with "authority in matters of faith," and by her catholic councils, I turn to the epistle of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and who, besides being inspired to write, must, of all men, have known most of the mind of his Lord. I read here a message to the "little children" whom he loved "in the truth." He is warning them against the many "antichrists" who, in fulfillment of prophecy, have, "in these last times" of the world, "already come," "denying the Father and

the Son ; ” and his declaration is as plain as this : “ Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.” The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you : but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him.

Other scriptures can be brought from both Testaments to confirm and illustrate what is here asserted. I can show you prophets and priests of the Old Dispensation, and apostles and saints of the New, on their knees, pleading, with one accord, the covenant of Jehovah for the teaching of the Holy Ghost. I can point to heroes and martyrs making this hope their confidence ; and to preachers of the Word sounding forth the free notes of the gospel trumpet, with this refrain : “ Not by power, nor by might, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.” I hear the sweet music of the Psalmist’s harp, as he thrills the chords with praise for the “ light and the truth sent out to guide him.” I might read to you dogmatic statements, like these : “ No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by

the Holy Ghost." "The veil is upon their hearts; nevertheless, when they shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." Or, I could show you examples of this teaching: such, for instance, as that of Lydia, "whose heart the Son opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul;" or of Cornelius and his company, of whom it is written, "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Or, I might call attention to the absolute need that there is of such intervention, in the sinner's behalf, by repeating the Apostle's explanation of the ignorance of the unconverted. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine upon them." A mind which is clouded by sin, and blinded by Satan, the grace of the Holy Spirit only can "turn from darkness to light:" and

hence the confession of divine power in the words, “ God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.” But vast and accumulative as would be such an array of testimony, it would not be clearer than the assertion of St. John in the text. You have here the inspired declaration of a fact, which is revealed as a part of the common experience of God’s children ; and it is pointed out as an essential feature of the life of faith. The “ ye,” which the Apostle employs in this passage, is emphatic. He appeals to Christian consciousness, and his language is equally a challenge to faith, and a tender assurance to love. He gives a characteristic description of the “ sons of God,” by which they are set forth in opposition to the “ many antichrists,” of whom it is added, “ They went out from us, but they were not of us ; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us : but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” As the light of the sun divides the day from the night, so the Spirit of Christ separates

“the children of the day” from those that “dwell in darkness.” “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” “And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” The Holy Catholic Church, “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,” is “a habitation of God, through the Spirit.” It is the presence of the Spirit, and the life and truth which, from Christ the Head, He imparts to redeemed sinners, born of Him unto God, which mark in ineffaceable characters of light the bounds and limits of that “mystical body, which is the blessed company of all faithful people.” And upon this body, our text declares, there is “an unction from the Holy One;” that is, from the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the true centre of unity, and fountain of blessings to all his people. The prophet Daniel predicted his anointing, to be the High Priest of his Church, under this name of the “Most Holy.” St. Peter, in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, proclaimed him by this title. An angel announced it to the Virgin Mary; and devils confessed it, when, in anticipation of judgment, they trembled

at the presence, on earth, of “ the Son of God.” Let us never forget, my hearers, that the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier, is the purchase of the cross, and the royal gift of our glorified Redeemer, while he pleads for us at the right hand of the Father. From the High Priest of the Church, who has “ passed within the veil,” the unction of the Spirit “ flows down to the skirts of his garment,” “ refreshing the faithful ” as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion.

And while this unction is a consecration of the whole Church, and of the entire man, in each regenerate believer, to all the offices which Christ the Head gives us a portion in, when making us “ kings and priests unto God and his Father,” it here especially brings to view the investing of the Church with the prophetic office, and the securing, for each believing heart (in the communion and fellowship of Christ), that Divine teaching which is an eminent blessing of the covenant of grace. “ Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.” It is a fact which rests upon an inspired dictum ; and in delivering it, the Apostle appeals to Christian consciousness. If any

of you reject the written Word of God, we must have recourse to other discussions, in order to secure assent to our supreme authority. The evidences of Christianity must be examined ; and the authenticity, credibility, and inspiration of the Scriptures must be established, by the cumulative proof, which it is impossible to invalidate. We invite here the most thorough investigation ; we would urge you, with all the earnestness of which we are capable, to sift the matter to the bottom. If any of you doubt whether the Bible is the Word of God, I beseech you, as you fear God and value your souls, lose no time in settling the question beyond all peradventure. It is an awful condition for any man to be in, that his only hope for eternity is that this Book, which has, all through the ages, withstood so many assaults of the most able and determined adversaries, and which remains to-day, in all the world, the one unlowered standard of truth and right, may, perhaps, be a lie ! But I address, to-night, those who accept the Bible as the Word of God. If I was not, my brethren, thoroughly persuaded of this fact, I would not dare stand in this holy presence. I hold the pulpit to be too awful

a place, too much surrounded with thoughts of God and visions of his judgment, for any man to make it a stage for the display of his own fancies ; and to entertain sinners, for an hour, with curious questions and novel theories. If I had not Christ to lean upon, and the truth of God authoritatively to proclaim from the Record of his will, I would close the Book, and forsake the assembly. It would seem too dangerous a jest, to be speculating to blind men, in the dark myself, on the soul and its destiny, on eternal life and death, on heaven and hell. I thank God for the Scriptures of truth : with all my heart, and in deepest humility, I accept them as a certain and definite rule of faith, sufficient in their plenary inspiration, for the Church of ages ; a rule, from which there can be no appeal ; none here, because Christ himself hath told us, there shall be none at the day of judgment. “ He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him,” our Lord declares ; “ the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” But with the Scriptures in my hand, which testify of Christ, the question meets me, How shall I ascertain their mean-

ing? The Book is nothing to me unless I am master of its thought. I shall not find eternal life, unless I know and obey its revelation. And here, brethren, on the authority of the Book itself, I take my position, that the right understanding of this inspired volume is not an acquirement of unaided human nature, but a gift of grace. The knowledge of "the truth as it is in Jesus," here revealed, is only to be obtained from Him who hath disclosed it. The Word of the Spirit must be interpreted to our minds and hearts by the Spirit. The Holy Ghost, promised by God for this purpose, must "take of the things of Christ," which are written in this Book, and show them unto us. The fact is, my friends, that the comprehension of Scripture, and the saving knowledge of Him to whom it testifies as our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, is not simply an intellectual result. It is a moral act. It does not depend only upon mental power, and study, and learning, and criticism. These are indeed, to a certain extent, necessary concomitants; and are by no means to be disregarded. Men must exercise intelligence, and employ diligence here, as they would in any department of

knowledge. But religion is not a science, to be worked out to our own apprehensions by methods of induction and discovery. It is an objective revelation of fact and truth, authoritatively set before us by God ; and it must meet with a welcome from our moral nature. It must be received with the meekness of faith, and the child-like docility of love. To accept the divine testimony concerning God and his Christ, sin and redemption, eternal death and everlasting life, is a spiritual process. It depends in a very great degree upon the moral state of the soul. "If any man," saith our Lord, "will do my will, he shall know of the doctrine." "With the heart," writes St. Paul, "man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

"We stand therefore, my brethren, in regard to the doctrine of Christianity, in a very different position from that which we occupy towards intellectual philosophy or physical science. In these, truth is to be pursued and brought forth from her hiding places, according to the natural processes of the understanding, by induction, and with the aid of observation and experiment.

The moral nature of man has but a subordinate relation to the investigation. But this is the peculiar domain of the gospel ; and as Christianity is the revelation of a special economy of redemption, it deals pre-eminently with supernatural subjects. It rests its claims to attention, indeed, upon facts which are supported by human testimony ; and appeals for its credentials, to matters of which the reason of man is able to take cognizance. It freely submits its external evidence to the closest scrutiny. It brings forward proof, so strong that no facts in the history of man are so well authenticated. It demands, from the reason of every man who has intellect sufficient to make him provident of his personal safety, a prompt and earnest investigation of its claims. And they are worse than mad, who pass it by (as they travel to eternity), with indifference, or a sneer. But when any one has, upon a thorough weighing of its abundant evidence, accepted it as from God, there can be no ground left for questioning any of its statements. A message from God must come with authority ; and the will of our Maker, proclaimed by his Eternal Son, demands, on our part, sub-

mission. When, moreover, it appears that, by reason of a deflection on our part from rectitude, we are in moral antagonism to holiness, we may well feel diffidence in making our thoughts the measure of the Divine counsels. “ My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord ; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” To the Roman governor who asked, with the indifference of skepticism, “ What is Truth ? ” and waited not for an answer, our Lord affirmed, “ My kingdom is not of this world.” It is an empire very different from the material power of Rome, or the intellectual supremacy of Athens. It is a moral power, a spiritual economy, set up indeed visibly in the earth, in an organized Church, but exercising its highest glory as “ the kingdom of heaven within us ; ” “ purifying the heart through faith,” and “ bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” “ Therefore,” saith St. Paul, “ if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.” When Nicodemus, the Pharisee, addressed

himself to Jesus, as “a teacher come from God,” and would inquire what was the instruction that He brought, our Lord met him at the threshold with the declaration, “Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Renewal of the heart by the Holy Ghost, the Master himself pronounces the first step in the school of Christ ; and the same truth He impresses afterwards upon the Jews : “It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.” “Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”

How emphatically, then, does Jesus confirm the word of his servant, when He makes prominent, both at the outset and the close of his ministry on earth, the necessity of “the unction from the Holy One,” if we would “know all things.” Humility and reverence are indeed qualities essential to proficiency in any department, even of human knowledge. A consciousness of ignorance, and of constant liability to error, with a profound loyalty to truth, are necessary safeguards against delusion ; where reason, in her legitimate sphere, is able to

sweep, with keen glance, the field of vision, and make discoveries for herself. But when from this vestibule of earth we pass into the temple of the Lord ; to bow at the very shrine of truth, in the blaze of that glory before which the angels veil their faces, men should surely be penetrated with the truest lowness. Standing on holy ground, and permitted, through the veil of Christ's flesh, to gaze into the very countenance of God (though it flash not with anger, or, like consuming fire, destroy us with its holiness, but beam upon us, in the tempered beauty of self-sacrificing love), we should "put our shoes from off our feet ;" and rejoice that we are permitted to take hold of "God's strength," and be instructed by his Holy Spirit. In such presence, who would be self-confident, or filled with his own pride ? Who would not rather exclaim, with the humbled man of Uz, "That which I see not, teach Thou me."

It is because moral conformity to God in some degree, is necessary for our understanding his ways, and the Holy Ghost is the only renewer of man's corrupt nature, after the image of God, that his grace is essential for the reception, on the part of

any man, of “the faith once delivered to the saints.” He does not, because He has completed the canon of Scripture as the only rule of faith, and enriched the Church, as “the pillar and ground of the truth,” with the record of eternal life, withdraw Himself from “the true tabernacle,” and leave the children of the covenant to their own devices. But in fulfillment of the parting promise of the Redeemer (when as our High Priest he passed within the veil), as his vicar, and the representative of his locally withdrawn humanity, “he abides” with his Church; applying Christ to believing hearts, in all the ordinances of grace; giving the living ministry its only power, and the sacraments their efficacy; and the Word its strength. He prepares the hearts of men, and teaches them wondrous things out of God’s law. He reveals to them, in the light of the commandment, their ruined state, and from the central cross of Calvary, irradiates the person and work of the Incarnate Son of God, with such grace and glory, that men are “drawn to Him with cords of love,” and embrace and adore Him as their Saviour and their Lord. It is the assurance of the presence

of this Divine Spirit, as the Teacher of those who, by his grace, He is “making meet” for glory, that gives reality and power to a prayer, like that of St. Paul for the Ephesians: “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe.” That petitions like these will be fulfilled, is the sure reliance of God’s children. On their knees, before the mercy-seat, with the eye of faith upon “the Holy One” enthroned at God’s right hand, and with the “lively oracles” of truth interpreted to them by the Spirit, they receive light from its source, and are “made wise unto salvation.” In the self-reliance of worldly wisdom, other men doubt, and speculate, and cavil; it is the blessing of God’s chosen, that unto them “it is given to believe.” Guided by the eye of One who hath loved them unto death, they are led “into green pastures and beside still

waters." There are those who laugh at their credulity, and mock their humble hope. But, leaning on the Saviour, and assured by his tenderness, they would not leave the sheltered spot in which they dwell with Him, for the dangerous adventure of the godless ; or the bold path which, with delusive promise of discovery, tempts the footsteps of the self-confident. Their psalm of assurance and hope is that of the sweet singer of Israel : " Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." My brethren, permit me to impress upon you the necessity and the blessedness of the teaching of the Holy Ghost. In all your study of Scripture, seek before all else the " unction from the Holy One," that ye may " know all things." Let each perusal of the Word of God be an act of devotion. Realize the special presence of the Almighty. Look up to the throne girt with the cherubim, and blazing with effulgent glory ; remember your ignorance, and note the moral darkness with which you are surrounded, in this world of sin. Venture not to decide beforehand what you would judge proper in a revelation. Trust not implicitly to a reason, clouded by

passion and enfeebled by sin ; bear in mind that the judgment may be warped by prejudice, and that “conscience” herself “is defiled” by transgression. Search the Scriptures on your knees, with faith in the promise of God, to “give his Holy Spirit to those who ask,” and with fervent prayer for his presence and guidance.

“ He openeth our eyes to see
(Eyes that our pride of heart hath sealed)
The sweetness of Life’s Heavenly Tree, —
The blind are healed ! ”

CHRIST RECEIVETH SINNERS.

“ This man receiveth sinners.” — ST. LUKE xv. 2.

THIS is the objection of the Pharisees and Scribes against Jesus Christ. It has been echoed by the self-righteous in all ages. Yet it is the hope of the world, and the glory of the Church. If it were not a fact, Christianity would be no religion for a sinful race. If it were not inscribed upon the banner of the cross, the kingdom of grace would gain no victory among men. It is “a Man,” around whom, as the centre of their strength, believers press. We are attracted by his true humanity ; we are won by his tender brotherhood. But when we look upon Him, what a man He is ! How different from all other men ! How unique his life ! how unparalleled his history ! how pure his character ! how grand his self-sacrifice ! how powerful his speech ! For eighteen hundred years the world has gazed upon Him with wonder and with awe. Enemies have assailed Him. Friends have betrayed Him. The Church has too often brought disgrace upon Him. The world

has been ready with reproach. Yet “ never man spake like this man.” Never has any one lived and died as He did. None occupy the same position ; no one attracts the same regard. Whether friend or foe call upon us to “ Behold the Man,” we know, at once and instinctively, who is meant. But how shall we draw near to Him ? He is so pure, so far removed from us by the lofty excellence of his character, and the singular holiness of his words. Evil is abashed in his presence ; sin is consumed in the splendor of his goodness. Shall we be content to gaze upon Him, as we would upon some distant star that gems the brow of midnight, and whose cold beauty can have but little influence upon our life ? It is something more than this that man wants in a religion. It is the necessity of his heart. It must be the informing principle of his nature. Worship must be a passion elevated and refined into a life. Contrast Christianity, in its effects, with the religions of the heathen world. They were something apart, super-added to the common round of life. They were the ornament of existence, not its warp. But this faith in Christ, which has irradiated the world with hope, is a factor in

the being of those who are possessed of it. It shapes their character and directs their walk. Where will you lay your finger upon the power which makes the religion of the cross, the controller of life ? How does Jesus chain to Himself the hearts of his people ?

Look at the scene which introduces our text. It is related by the Evangelist in a sentence ; but it is like one of those momentary flashes of light upon the electro-plate, which fixes the picture. “ Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him.”

What a painting is this ! All around the edges are the deep, dark colors of evil. Sin, in its horrid forms, is shedding upon the canvas the hue of death. The world, stripped of its disguises, is here concentrated in its corruption. All that is base and vile and degrading is united to make a vast circumference of gloom. And in the centre He stands, who is “ the Light of the world,” yea, whose Divine beauty is “ the light ” in “ the midst of heaven.” Every color of truth and holiness, like the rainbow tints of the prism, unite in Him to give forth the most dazzling brilliance. The contrast is

sublime. The separation between good and ill is infinite. Any mixture is impossible ; any overshadowing, with the cloud of wickedness, this pure centre of goodness, is beyond imagination. Not in the day of trial, and before the throne of the Judge, blazing with glory, and surrounded by the angel host, will the distinction be more absolute between right and wrong. You see Jesus in the perfection of his nature. You see sinners in the guilt and depravity of their ruin. And yet you observe no repulsion. On the contrary, He “ who is the brightness of his Father’s glory ” is “ drawing all men unto Him ; ” that is, all who know and feel themselves to be sinners : only the self-righteous, who are blind to their demerit, are not attracted by his grace. “ The Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners.” How, I ask, can you explain this fact ? Why is Divine Purity the loadstone to draw to it evil, that it may recreate it in its own beautiful likeness ? Why is the only “ Holy One ” that has ever stood in the circle of our humanity, the force that lifts it to heaven, through the energy which binds its disordered members to Himself ? I am searching now for the idea

of Christianity ; the central truth which constitutes its power ; and, brethren, I find the answer to my inquiry in the objection of the adversary, “ This man receiveth sinners.” There you have the formula of our religion ; with this declaration, it will go forth to conquer and subdue. The Man, whose glory we proclaim, is indeed the most wonderful that has appeared in the world. In vain do you search history for his peer. The mind of man hath never dared to conceive such a person. Romance has no such hero. Poetry has never risen to such an ideal. Who can fail to admire ? But admiration secures not the power we claim for our faith. It is sympathy, fellowship, communion, that the gospel offers. It presents not merely a model, but a Saviour. The Man whom, as one with God, we adore, offers Himself to our love ; invites us to his arms ; calls upon us to be his friends. His message to a lost world is, that He “ receiveth sinners.”

Is it not the sinner’s alienation from God which is his curse ? “ Without God in the world,” he is necessarily “ without hope ; ” yea, he is without everything that is adequate to make him useful. Reconciliation

between God and man is the only idea that offers happiness. Light only can dispel darkness. Goodness alone can overthrow evil. Has not God, in the person of his Son Jesus Christ, undertaken this work? Has not the cross, with its atoning victim, the substitute for the guilty child of Adam, accomplished it in behalf of all who will come unto Him by faith? "In Him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." And now, the music of heaven is breathed through this world of sin, and the note which thrills the heart, and attracts dead sinners to life and salvation, is, "This man receiveth sinners."

If we feel that we are sinners — and to convince us of this is the first work of the Holy Ghost when He would quicken us in Christ Jesus — how shall we realize our banishment from God, our condemnation to eternal wrath, our subjection to corruption and death! The sense of sin, how it crushes us with the weight of guilt, the load of God's displeasure, the fearful "looking for of judgment!" The working of corruption, how it fills us with sorrow and darkness! what bitterness it diffuses through our nature!

what slaves to lust it makes us! "O, wretched man," we are ready to cry, "who shall deliver me?" We search in vain, within and around us, for strength or rescue. "Led captive by Satan at his will," when the commandment comes, "sin revives, and we die." The one word that the heart of the convicted sinner longs to hear is Salvation. Is there any help, any hope? "A man," says the prophet, "shall be a hiding-place." In Christ we see the Man alone sufficient for a refuge. If we can only know that He will aid us, that He will not reject our plea, that He will consider our misery! How precious, then, the word of the Scripture, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," even "the chief." How encouraging to hear enemies objecting to Him, that He "receiveth sinners." How fully assuring his own promise, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

My dear fellow-sinners, I do not stand here to unfold to you a philosophy. It is no part of my message to acquaint you with science, or instruct in earthly wisdom. It is not morals alone, that I am ordered to

enforce and expound. I have no word to utter of politics and wordly rule: learning and eloquence, even if they should be possessed by the preacher, must be altogether subsidiary; everything must give way before the one great duty of an ambassador of Christ, which is to point you to Him, and assure you that "He is able save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by Him." If you are a sinner, and know it, I have a message to your soul. "This man receiveth sinners." He receives them at once, fully to his love, gives them salvation, restores them to God, and welcomes them to heaven. O, had I ten thousand tongues, this would be the invitation which I would employ them all in uttering, the echo of the voice of Christ himself, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

(1.) He receives sinners freely. He does not require you to bring anything whatever to purchase his favor. Just bring your poor, naked, guilty, polluted soul, with all its vileness and all its weakness. He has paid the penalty of its transgression, He has earned for it by his obedience an eternal reward. It is no bargain with you that He

makes. His covenant has been entered into with the Father, and it secures "all who come unto God by Him." You are not first to repent, and then come—not first to amend your life, and then seek the Saviour: this is the self-deception of the Pharisee; it is the lie of Satan; it is the device of a proud and unsubdued heart. Christ is exalted to "give repentance." We are "created in Him unto good works." "It is given unto us to believe" in Him; and He alone can "increase our faith." Come then, with nothing in your hand, but with the empty palm extended to touch the hem of his garment, to grasp his cross, to seize, as you cry to Him for mercy, his proffered hand. "He is able to save," for He has "purchased us with his blood," and for us fulfilled the law. He is willing to save, for He "loved us, and gave Himself for us." Come to Him, as Matthew from the receipt of custom; as Peter, amid the waves of the sea; as the leper, who asked to be made clean; as the thief on the cross, who begged to be remembered in the kingdom.

(2.) Christ receives sinners at once. He will not put them off to the hour of death, or the day of judgment, or to some uncer-

tain future. As soon as you come, He will meet you. If He turn away his face, or seem not to hear, it is only that He may try and strengthen your faith. Christ's salvation is a present one. "While we are yet speaking He will hear." His answers to beseeching hearts are, "This day is salvation come to this house." "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Delays are on the part of sinners, who "will not come," do not believe, ask not, and receive not. Christ "waiteth to be gracious." He says, "I will, be thou whole." "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

(3.) Christ receives sinners with a loving welcome. The same readiness that the Pharisees faulted in the text belongs to Him now. "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Has He not come "to seek and to save that which was lost," and will He not take pleasure in his work? "Behold," He says, "I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." O, what a welcome is this to the soul that

trusteth in Him. He stretches forth the golden sceptre, and bids us live. "The Lord thy God," saith the prophet, "in the midst of thee is mighty ; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy ; He will rest in his love ; He will joy over thee with singing."

(4.) Christ receives sinners to a full salvation. This is the glory and strength of the gospel. If sinners were only received to be instructed, or have an example set them, or even to be pardoned, and then sent back to keep themselves in the favor of God, and make their way to heaven in their own power ; however great the condescension, it would not avail to our deliverance. If the truth were taught us, we should only the more deeply be convinced of sin. The brightness of Christ's example, if this were all that was revealed to us, would only cause us to despair. In the effulgence of his glory, we could only cry, "My leanness, my leanness ;" and the height of the prize would make it beyond our reach. And if once forgiven, and then turned over to our own devices, how soon would we be hopelessly defiled with transgression, as each step carried us farther from Christ. But,

brethren, Christ does not “receive sinners,” merely to mock them and leave them more desperate in their course of evil. He calls them to Him to bestow upon them life; He saves them fully, by uniting them through faith to Himself. They are accepted, pardoned, quickened, preserved. The grace of forgiveness is accompanied with the grace of renewal. He covers us with his righteousness, and at the same time new creates us by his Spirit. He brings us “near” to God, and then gives the power to “walk with God.” He communicates to us the Holy Ghost, and “makes us partakers of the Divine nature.” Having “begotten us again to a lively hope,” and “reserved in heaven for us an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away,” we are “kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.” He “will not forsake the work of his own hand;” He will not leave us to stumble in darkness, and be lost again in the night of sin; but He will “beautify the meek with salvation, and establish his word unto his chosen.”

(5.) Christ receives sinners to his communion. The Pharisees complained that

He “ate with” sinners. This was in the greatness of his condescension, and his readiness to aid and bless them. He came near to them in love, and held the most familiar converse with them. He was not ashamed of their company, and shrank not from their corruption in order that He might heal them. And how fully is this realized by those whom He receives to Himself, and presents as righteous before his Father. He names them “friends.” He is “not ashamed to call them brethren.” He abides with them forever; receives them into his kingdom; gives them a new name as his children; places them around his table; feeds them with Himself, the bread that came down from heaven; nourishes them unto eternal life; and by his indwelling Spirit, and with his Holy Word and ordinances, maintains a close and loving fellowship with them, as the “members of his body.” Jesus said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” “Truly,” saith the disciple, who lay on his breast, “our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

Such, brethren, is our gospel; an invita-

tion to the “man” who “receiveth sinners.” Others will condemn sinners, or join with them in transgression, or punish their crimes, or uphold them in their guilt. But this Man “loved them and gave Himself for them ;” He shed his blood for their salvation ; and if they will but come to Him in faith, He will accept them fully, pardon them at once, give them a welcome, bestow full salvation, and abide with them in affectionate communion. Have you come to Him ? and have you not found Him true ? Will you come to Him ? He will receive you graciously, and make you the monument of his mercy and loving-kindness.

THE GROUND OF THE BELIEVER'S ACCEPTANCE.

"Accepted in the Beloved." — EPHESIANS i. 6.

So does the Apostle, in a brief but expressive sentence, describe the blessedness of "the faithful in Christ Jesus." No higher privilege, my brethren, no greater distinction, is enjoyed by any of the sons of men. It is the charter of salvation, which sovereign grace places in the hand of faith. It is the assurance of the believing sinner, as in trusting confidence he beholds "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and is taught by the Spirit of Holiness, from the Word of Truth, "how God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." It is the conveyance to "the new creature in Christ Jesus" of all the blessings of the covenant of grace, culminating in the eternal inheritance of "the purchased possession," "unto the praise of God's glory." Let us examine this miniature likeness of a believer, and we shall find how beautifully the Holy Spirit has delineated the child of grace.

First, There is, of necessity, brought into view the dark background of his unregenerate and unbelieving state. There was for him then — there is for every unconverted child of Adam — no acceptance with God. “By nature,” saith the Apostle, “we were all children of wrath.” “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” However man may dispute his guilt, he cannot deny his mortality; and “death is the wages of sin;” wherever it is found, it bears witness of transgression. The only conclusion to be drawn from the fearful spectacle of death, universally triumphant over man, is that of the Inspired Word, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” and the God with whom we have to do, “is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin.” There can therefore be no acceptance for any member of an universally guilty race. “By the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.” And even had it not been so, and were each individual, at his birth, freed from the condemnation of original transgression, where could be found, in any generation, the

single man who could render himself acceptable to God ? Consider who God is, holy, just, and true, knowing all things ; “ searching the heart, and trying the reins : ” and then look at man, in his corruption and weakness, his blindness and ignorance, his heedlessness and perversity, and remember that, for him to be acceptable, there must be no flaw in obedience, no single stain of evil, no defect of motive or conduct, thought or deed, through all the extent and in every moment of his whole life. Nothing short of absolute perfection can be acceptable to God. My brethren, it surely does not require argument to convince you, that if the question is as to acceptance with God, by the perfection of your own righteousness, not one of you can stand. Will you confess no evil ? admit no error ? acknowledge no sin ? Under the just judgment of the law, “ Whosoever offendeth in one point is guilty of all,” and it is the essential characteristic of a holy God, that He “ will by no means clear the guilty.” If men would consider the matter without partiality, and without some vague and unfounded hopes of mercy in an administration of pure and exact rectitude, they would be forced to acknowledge that,

as a subject of God and under the law, man cannot by any work and performance of his own "be accepted." To be taught this by the Holy Spirit, under the clear shining of the inspired commandment, is the first triumph of grace in the soul. "I was alive without the law once," writes St. Paul, "but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." And the regenerate believer never realizes acceptance in the Beloved, without deep convictions of his natural alienation from God. The brightness of his hope in Christ casts deeper the shadow of his bondage under the law ; and his nearness to God, as he shelters beneath the cross, makes him more than ever conscious how before conversion he was "afar off," by original and actual transgression.

Second. But it is a redemption that the gospel of the Son of God proclaims ; and it "declares his righteousness ; that God might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." The acceptance of the sinner is the great end secured, "to the praise of the glory of his grace." Upon what eternal principles of holiness and truth this is effected, is what I shall presently ask you to consider ; but first I desire to impress you

with the full significance of the word here employed by the Apostle to express the restored condition of the ransomed believer. "Accepted." This, while it necessarily includes forgiveness, has a much wider meaning. A criminal, convicted at the bar of justice, may be pardoned by the clemency of his sovereign, and released from the death penalty of his offense; but this only delivers him from punishment. It does not introduce him to the favor, or obtain for him the affection, of the king. It confers no character of positive righteousness. It makes him in no degree the object of reward, or the proper claimant of further benefactions. But when acceptance is spoken of, something of positive good is implied. Some performance is had regard to, which has been satisfactorily accomplished; some quality inheres in the person or character, which secures approbation. In the sinner's being accepted with God, more is meant, therefore, than that his guilt is canceled, and his condemnation removed. Restoration to favor, participation in love, intercourse, reward are implied; obedience rendered, and services commended, are included. There is not only release from imprisonment, but

the welcome home. St. Paul, in connection with our text, speaks of those who are “accepted,” as “made nigh by the blood of Christ ;” “raised up together with Him ;” “made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus ;” and “blessed with all spiritual blessings.” The word “accepted” has, bound up in it, all the grace of the sinner’s restoration to Divine favor, and adoption into “the glorious liberty of the children of God.” “Righteousness is imputed to him ;” such righteousness, so perfect and absolute, as God delights in. Eternal love pours its sunshine of joy and tenderness upon him ; rewards of obedience are apportioned to him ; blessings of life and salvation surround him ; there are no mountains of sin, no clouds of wrath, between God and his soul ; the All Holy opens his heart, and graciously welcomes him to communion and fellowship.

My dear hearers, I want you to take this word “accepted” into your hearts. I would have your faith grasp it, in its full and wonderful meaning. As you lie at the foot of the cross, and look up trustingly to the Saviour who hung thereupon for your salvation, I would that you should repeat it over, with

gratitude and joy, weighing all its fullness, and drawing out, in prayer and confidence, the sweetness of its hope. If you do believe in the Son of God, it is all yours. If you "have the Son," you "have" this "life." You are not only forgiven, but you are brought very near to God, in the most endeared relation. "He is your shield, and your exceeding great reward." I am afraid, my brethren, that as the unconverted world understand nothing of being "accepted" with God, because they would dare attempt to purchase his favor with their own wretched deeds of unrighteousness ; so even those who "have a good hope through grace" do not, because of remaining unbelief, always enjoy the comfort of assured acceptance ; their trust is wavering, and their joy is uncertain. Some scarcely venture to hope ; others are shaken by varying frames ; few of us always realize what a present and eternal blessing it is to be "accepted ;" perfectly restored to God's favor, and fully endowed with the glory of his inheritance. Do you know what it is to be "saved by grace" ? saved now ? already delivered ? Can you, though deeply conscious of sin, look up by faith in the spirit of adoption,

to God upon his throne of glory, and say, “ My Father ; and heaven, my home ” ?

This is not presumption, as the unbelieving world calls it ; it would be worse than that, if the acceptance was on account of anything in or about ourselves ; it would in that case be the insulting boldness of unsubdued rebels, the too daring intrusion of the unreconciled. But it is the authorized language of God’s children, when it is spoken from the “ broken and contrite heart,” with the gaze upon Christ, and the arms of faith clinging to his cross. Every guilty soul, that has been brought home to God, is, as our text declares, “ accepted in the Beloved.”

Third. And this is what I wish lastly to dwell upon, that you may see how, in “ the riches of his grace,” God hath “ abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence.” If you would understand the ground of the sinner’s acceptance, go and stand before the cross. See the Holy One, “ by wicked hands crucified and slain.” Consider his person ; “ God manifest in the flesh ; ” the co-equal Son of the Father, and his humanity undefiled. Review his life, and search out, if you can, a single flaw in his

obedience. God hath declared from heaven that “in Him He is well pleased.” Himself confessed that it “behooved Him to fulfill all righteousness ;” and men, with the voice of his judge and his executioner, have pronounced Him “without fault,” and “a righteous man.” And yet upon the tree of shame He is “accursed,” and suffers and dies. “It pleased the Lord to bruise Him ; He hath put Him to grief.” The decree went forth, “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts.” And why this Divine smiting of Innocence ? this inflicting of the death penalty upon the Just ? The answer is given by the prophet, and it is the only satisfactory explanation of the facts. “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with his stripes we are healed.” “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” “Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.” To which add the declaration of the Apostle, “Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that

are past." "For, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners ; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." To quote the many passages in which Jesus Christ is declared to be "the Lord our righteousness," "by whom also we have received the atonement," would be to transcribe a very large part of the Scriptures ; for this is indeed the burden of their teaching. Man is stripped of all pretension to righteousness, and shown in the nakedness of his guilt, and the helpless defilement of his corruption. It is emphatically declared that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified ;" and then is held forth the glorious gospel, "even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe."

As Noah entered into the ark to be saved from the flood ; as the manslayer fled into the city of refuge, to be delivered from the avenger ; so there is for the sinner deliverance from the flood of Divine wrath, and rescue from the avenging sword of the law, only "in the Beloved." Christ is the true ark, and the abiding city of refuge. To Him, by faith, must we flee, convinced of sin, conscious of ruin, oppressed with cor-

ruption. Into Him, as “the second Adam, the Lord from heaven,” must we enter, by a personal and appropriating trust; we must be engrafted into Him by the sovereign grace of the Holy Ghost, through a new birth from above; not “of water” only, or sacramentally, in outward baptism, but “of the Spirit,” being vitally united to Him as our Living Head, and made one with Him in “his mystical body, which is the blessed company of all faithful people.” Then, brethren, as our Great Head stands face to face with God in heaven, in our nature presenting the work which He hath performed, and the sacrifice of Himself, which He hath offered “once for all,” in behalf of his people, God looks upon Him with acceptance, declares his work perfect, his atonement sufficient, and his person unspeakably beloved; and in Him and through Him He looks upon every sinner united to Him by faith; and such they are in his sight, as is his well-beloved Son himself. This, my hearers, is the glorious and eternal hope of every believing child of grace. If “the Beloved” of the Father is “accepted” before Him; if He, filled with unutterable affection for his only begotten,

“ raised Him from the dead and set Him at his own right hand, in the heavenly places ; far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things under his feet ; and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church : ” then shall that Church “ which is his body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all,” as it is joined in its every living member to Him by faith, and trusts in Him alone, enjoy a present and eternal salvation. In each individual believer there is, indeed, infirmity, corruption, and sin ; but the acceptance is not of us as we are in ourselves, but as we are in Christ ; as his atoning blood flows over us, and his righteous obedience to the law is imputed to us : and “ in the Lord,” saith the prophet, “ shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory ; ” “ this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord ; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.”

How vital then, to every one of us, my brethren, if we would know ourselves “ accepted,” is the question, Am I “ in the Beloved ” ? Have I been taught by the

Spirit of God to know and acknowledge myself a guilty and lost sinner ? Have I utterly renounced my own righteousness, and all thought of creature merit or worth, as the ground of God's favor ? Have I been drawn, by grace, to Him who was lifted up on the cross for the salvation of sinners ? Have I looked by faith upon Him, the Incarnate Son of God, bleeding and dying for my redemption ? Have I seen how perfect is his work, and how complete his righteousness ? And have I put my case in his hands, with the cry of a penitent soul, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on me ;" " plead Thou my cause and deliver me ?" Do I believe that He hears me ? and do I rest upon Him with full confidence in his promise, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" ? Does nothing shake me from this trust, and, though assaulted by Satan, and enticed by the world, and buffeted by remaining corruption in my own nature, do I "know nothing," as my hope, but "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," while I cling in God-imparted strength to "the rock that is higher than I" ? O, brethren, if this is so, have you not felt how firm that rock is ?

how it is based upon the eternal God, and rises grandly above all the billows and tempest of guilt? Do you not find in it, not only munitions of defense, but springs of comfort? There is the water of the Spirit to refresh, as well as the blood of atonement to cleanse; there is the grace of life, as surely as the grace of rescue. Those to whom heaven is a certain inheritance are made meet by the sanctifying spirit for its holy enjoyment, while their security and their renewal are alike referred to the covenant, by which grace has made them "accepted in the Beloved." And are there any before me unaccepted? who have not fled to the refuge? My dear, unconverted hearers! I cannot close without a word of earnest call and entreaty to you. "Behold the Lamb of God!" Come unto Jesus, just as you are; you cannot make yourselves better; come at once, and He will give you rest; will present you faultless before God; will clothe you with Himself, and make you "accepted in the Beloved." May God draw you, every one, by his Spirit, to Him who was lifted up for your rescue!

A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE.

"Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" — ZECH. iii. 2.

THIS is the description of every sinner, as he stands before God, "saved by grace," in Christ Jesus. There are few passages of Scripture which set forth more clearly the condition of those whom Christ hath loved, "and washed from their sins in his own blood, and made kings and priests unto God and his Father," than the chapter from which my text is taken. The vision which was granted to the prophet is a graphic picture of the guilt of a sinner, the accusation of his adversary, and the sufficient mediation of the Saviour. "And He showed me," writes Zechariah, "Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel, and

he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by."

Mark, my brethren, the position of the believing sinner, as here exhibited in the person of Joshua. He "stands before the angel of the Lord ;" that is, the Jehovah Angel, Christ the Saviour. To Him the eye of faith, as soon as it is opened by renewing grace, is turned. To Him comes the "weary and heavy-laden sinner," invited by his loving voice, and, in the deepest sense of guilt and ruin, stands before Him, with his hand upon his mouth, and not a word to say in excuse of his offenses. He is not overwhelmed with the glory of his majesty, or consumed with the brightness of his appearing ; because He is the Angel of the Covenant, the one Mediator between God and man. He "is clothed with the cloud" of that humanity which veils the

Godhead, and the “rainbow of promise is around Him.” Let no sinner fear to approach his throne of grace; for no guilt is too great to be forgiven by Him, “who saveth unto the uttermost.” To “pluck brands from the burning” is a Saviour’s chosen work. O, my dear brethren, that you would trust his word, and test for yourselves his mercy. Him that cometh unto Him, He will in no wise cast out. Nor tremble because, when you draw near, “Satan,” “the accuser of the brethren,” “stands at your right hand.” He is there indeed as your adversary; ready to do you all the evil that he can. Having “led you,” in an unregenerate state, “captive at his will,” he will not, without a struggle, surrender you to the “Captain of your salvation.” He will accuse you to God. He will accuse you at the bar of your own conscience. He will bring the law to bear upon you, and make your guilty soul tremble, at the thunders of Sinai against transgression. “We are not ignorant of his devices.” Would that men more thoroughly understood his enmity, that they might flee to Christ, who will bruise him under our feet shortly. Observe, in the passage before us, how he antici-

pates the attack of the evil one. While he stands glowering upon the escaped captive, ere he puts forth a hand, or opens his mouth to revile him, the voice of the Redeemer is heard, rebuking his malice, and owning “the Church, which He hath purchased with his blood,” “chosen of the Lord;” and each of its elect members, “a brand plucked out of the fire.” Satan must hold his peace, when our champion is the Son of God. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” In that intercession is the believing sinner’s safety. “Deliver from going down into the pit,” is the plea, “I have found a ransom.” And now, having looked upon the Intercessor, you may turn your eyes upon him for whom He is the Advocate. You shall see nothing that does not merit punishment; you can discover no ground of acceptance in a sinner; “clothed with filthy garments,” he stands before the Angel. Nothing, my brethren, so brings to light the vileness of the trans-

gressor, as the glory of his Redeemer. In the presence of Christ, at the foot of his cross, before the mercy-seat, sprinkled with his atoning blood, we are more deeply conscious of sin, than anywhere else. That blood was shed for our offenses ; that infinite sacrifice of God's dear Son was required for our acceptance. Nothing has any child of Adam to bring, but "the filthy garments" of his guilt. In these is he clothed by birth from a sinful father ; and from day to day he has more and more defiled them by willful transgression. But coming unto Jesus, he stands before the only One who is able to deliver, and as he looks to Him, with a self-renouncing trust, and the prayer for acceptance through his blood, the "answer" of salvation will be heard in the presence of saints and angels, "Take away the filthy garments from him ;" while with the assurance of his love sealed upon the heart by the Holy Spirit, the voice of Jesus declares, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." So free, so glorious, is the grace of acceptance. No sooner does the eye of the Saviour rest upon the contrite sinner, than forgiveness

is bestowed, and while Satan seeks to accuse him, he is “clothed with the garment of salvation.” O, my fellow-sinners, whither will you turn for help? will you not come to this sheltered place? Here before Jesus, at the foot of his cross, and where He pleads at the right hand of God, there is safety.

“ When the accuser flings his darts,
I look to Christ, my terrors cease;
His cross a hiding-place imparts;
He is my peace.”

“ Is not this,” He asks, in rebuke of the adversary, as He spreads the skirt of a kinsman over the believer, “a brand plucked out of the fire?” From the stroke of justice, from the sentence of the law, from the flames of hell, have I rescued him. With my life have I purchased his. “ He shall never perish, neither shall any pluck him out of my hand.”

How great, brethren, the blessedness of being thus redeemed; clothed with Christ, our righteousness, and defended by the Great Advocate of his people, at the bar of God. Do you know, let me ask, this grace of acceptance? It is the very first that the sinner should seek, and it is to be found only by faith in the Son of God. “ He that

hath the Son hath life." Only believe, and the mercy is yours. But, as our prophet's vision teaches, the blessing does not stop here. The justified sinner is to be admitted to "fellowship" with God; and "to show forth," in a new and holy life, "the praises of Him who has called him, out of darkness, into his marvelous light." A voice falls upon the ear of the child of grace, calling him to ministry and self-sacrifice, to the oblation of thanksgiving, in personal devotion to Christ, his Lord. As the symbol of that priesthood in which Joshua had a part at the request of the prophet, "Let them set a fair mitre upon his head," the privilege of service is conferred: "So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by." So also, St. Peter tells us that believers are "a royal priesthood." Not that we have, either ministers or people, any sacrifice of propitiation to offer; for this has been done "once for all," and He, who made it upon the cross, "stands by" the throne, pleading it in our behalf, and thus rendering possible a eucharistic offering. But the offering of ourselves, "body, soul, and spirit," a living sacrifice, is "accepta-

ble to God," and is required at our hands. And who, my brethren, should be so ready to present it, as those who have been " plucked out of the fire ; " graciously and wondrously delivered by the passion of God's dear Son ? If we realize the death from which we have been snatched, we will feel that the life which has been bestowed should be devoted to the Lord. Let every pardoned sinner among you, who, standing before Christ, is justified by faith, bear in mind what he is, " a brand," which, gathered from the sinful stock of fallen Adam, was being consumed by the holiness and justice of God, itself feeding, with its own corruption, the flames of Divine vengeance. We have only to look into the experience of the wicked in this life, to see that the elements of eternal misery are at work. The most frightful idea which you can present to yourself of hell, is the development of the disease of sin. The malady which feeds upon the moral and physical being of the transgressor has but to run its course, unchecked by any remedy, and everlasting death must be the consequence. The penalties of Divine law overtake the evil-doer, through the avenues which himself has laid open to the assault,

and the sinner, through eternity, supplies the fuel for his own destruction. What gratitude, then, should be awakened in our hearts towards Him, who, at his own great sacrifice, has stretched forth an arm of strength, to provide deliverance from our guilt! The salvation which has been wrought, the pardon which is sealed upon the believing heart by the Holy Ghost, the sense of peace and security, which the shelter of Christ affords, should fire the heart, renewed by grace, with the most intense devotion to the Saviour. “We love Him because He first loved us.” We will live to Him who gave Himself for us. No self-sacrifice can be too great; no affection too strong; no labor too earnest. All I am, and all I have, is his, who hath “saved me by his grace.”

And let the same consideration keep you humble, in your thankfulness. What is the value of a half-burnt brand? What is the merit of a sinner, already in the hands of justice? Well may we inquire, Why this mercy? Whence the depth of this love? Why me, O Lord, when others are consumed? Why men, when fallen angels are unredeemed? “O, the depth of the riches

both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out ! ”

Use the thought also, my believing brethren, for comfort and assurance. If Christ has plucked you from the fire, will He suffer you to be burnt ? Will He “ forsake the work of his own hands ” ? It is a blessed thing to realize that we are in Divine keeping. Omnipotence is our security. Grace has rescued us. The everlasting arms are around us. God has said, “ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” And though, in the path of obedience, we shall meet with many difficulties, and be assaulted by powerful adversaries, and tried with various temptations, He who has snatched us from destruction is “ praying for us,” with his all-prevailing intercession ; his Holy Spirit is imparted in the covenant of grace. The strength with which the children of God battle against sin is not their own, but his ; and the promise is sure, that we shall be “ kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”

And let us be stimulated to the highest effort after holiness, by the reflection that it will bring glory to God, for such “ brands

from the burning" to be transformed into lights of grace, kindled by his love, fed by the unction of his Spirit, and shining with the brightness of his gospel, in the midst of a dark and sinful world. "They glorified God in me," writes St. Paul, when he speaks of the effect that his conversation had upon his fellow Christians. And he declares, "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering." The grace of the Saviour is wondrously illustrated in the saved. They manifest his power and compassion to the sons of men. They are "living epistles," in which are written by the finger of the Spirit the glory of God. Reflecting the image of Jesus, and the holiness of his gospel, men "take knowledge of them, that they have been with Him;" and we are bid to look for Him, as "coming to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe." What an incitement this, to a holy walk; every Christian temper, every humble effort to do good, each act of self-denial, every victory over sin, exhibits the power and grace of Christ; "brands plucked from the fire" glow as stars in the firmament, "declaring the glory of God, and showing forth his handiwork."

Nor let us forget the consummation of that work of grace, which is begun in the rescue of the believer from the "death in trespasses and sins." "The brand is plucked out of the fire" to be exalted to everlasting happiness and glory. The sense of deliverance should grow in your heart into "the hope of salvation." When we consider "the hole of the pit whence we were digged," we should lift the eye of faith to "the mountain of the Lord's house, which shall be established in the top of the mountain." Some men's views of heaven are clouded by their imperfect apprehension of the grace of redemption. Conscious of sin, encompassed with evil, they have but indistinct glimpses of "the glory which shall be revealed." They hesitate to contemplate that of which they feel so insecure. "The crown of life" is too much regarded as if it were a reward of our imperfect obedience, instead of "the gift of God through Jesus Christ;" and hence there is reluctance to look upon its beauty, count its precious jewels, and estimate its eternal splendor. If we were, through grace, assured of having been "plucked from the fire," we should have much greater satisfaction in anticipat-

ing our everlasting joy. Heaven would look like home. We should survey the “many mansions of our Father’s house,” and “know” that we “have a building of God, eternal in the heavens.” And this heavenly-mindedness would incite us to holiness; we should be ever seeking to be “made meet” for that which we are to inherit. Little would we regard the trials and losses of earth. “Strangers and pilgrims,” we should press “to the prize of our high calling.” Utterly unworthy, we should yet realize that to this we are “called;” and to this, through grace, shall we surely come; for “plucked” by God “from the fire,” we are held by an arm omnipotent; and no man is able to pluck us out of the Father’s hand.

Are there any here to-day, who have not been “plucked out of the fire?” any who are yet “brands” of sin, kindled by lust, fed by corruption, blown upon by the breath of Satan, and the winds of temptation, burning with passion, making of themselves fuel for the righteous flames of Divine vengeance against the guilty? O, my unconverted hearer! that I could show you your peril, and impress you with a sense

of your ruin ! Rapidly is sin doing its work ; parching up your spiritual nature, destroying all that is noble and godlike in your being. As the hissing flames enwrap some majestic edifice, and, leaping from roof to spire, leave a charred and ill-shapen ruin, so is your moral nature assailed by evil ; and unless the conflagration is checked, the “temple of your body” will be a desolation. Cry unto God for help. He can stretch forth the hand that shall save ; He can deliver you from the destroyer, and pluck you from the fire. But there is hope nowhere else ; and the flames that are feeding upon you while you give way to passion, and shroud your soul in unbelief, are but precursors of the ruin which shall be complete, when, with no Saviour to shelter, and no advocate to maintain your cause, you shall stand face to face with that God in judgment, who is “a consuming fire.” Before that awful hour, may Christ, by his grace, “pluck you as a brand out of the fire.”

THE CARNAL MIND ENMITY AGAINST GOD.

"The carnal mind is enmity against God." — ROMANS viii. 7.

By "the carnal mind" is meant the corrupt nature of man. The sacred Scriptures inform us that, after his fall, "Adam begat a son in his own likeness;" and our Lord declares that "Whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh." The Apostle therefore sets forth the condition in which every child of Adam is born into the world.

Without a correct knowledge of our misery, we shall not earnestly seek that renewal after the likeness of God, which Jesus Christ, the second Adam, as St. Paul names Him, hath, by his cross and passion, purchased for his believing seed. Let us then, with prayer for the teaching of God the Holy Ghost, examine what the Word of God reveals concerning our ruin. The Inspired Record is explicit, as to the way in which sin entered our world. The Bible opens with the account of the creation of man "in the image of God," and tells

us of his being placed under probation, in which a positive command of God was the test of obedience. This command Adam, yielding to the temptation of Satan, disobeyed, and so came under sentence of death. Besides the mortality of the body, the penalty included the loss of the Divine image in which man was created, and his banishment, along with the fallen angels, from God. Jehovah pronounced the sentence, and our parents were driven from Eden, into a world cursed on account of their transgression. As the head of the human family, God made with Adam the covenant of works. His posterity were "yet in his loins" when he transgressed, and in him broke the condition of that covenant, in which life is the reward of obedience. Had he retained innocence, his descendants would have inherited his reward; when he yielded to temptation, by the just judgment of God, they were overtaken by the curse. "In Adam," saith the Scriptures, "all die." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The Word of God declares the universality of sin. "The

Lord," we are told, "looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one." "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." "How then can he be clean that is born of a woman?"

But what is each man's portion of this universal guilt? My brethren, there is no question of higher moment. It is personal to us all. To bring sin home to the conscience, is one of the main ends of preaching. To prove the depravity of human nature, so that we may, every one for ourselves, realize that "there is no health in us," and be brought through grace to repentance and faith in Christ, is, before all things, necessary. Yet no task is more difficult to accomplish. It can only be effected, in any case, when the declarations and reproofs of Scripture are carried home to the heart, by the convicting Spirit of Grace. The text presents a fearful view of corruption. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." No words could be more explicit. It does not describe our fallen nature as

indifferent to God, or forgetful of Him, or partially opposed to Him, but as itself “enmity against Him.” “An enemy,” it has been said, “may be reconciled; a carnal man may become spiritual; but enmity, in the abstract, cannot be reconciled, and therefore the carnal mind must be crucified and destroyed.” Let us survey the force and extent of this enmity, as it reigns in the unregenerate sinner.

All the faculties of man’s being are affected by its influence.

Look at his understanding.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul describes the condition of the Gentiles, before their conversion to Christ: “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;” and the prophet Jeremiah addresses the impenitent of his day as a “foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes and see not; which have ears and hear not.” Man has lost, through sin, the intuitive perception of truth. He does not clearly discern between right and wrong; nor can he accurately distinguish truth from falsehood. Enfeebled

in intellect, his judgment is clouded, and his reasoning powers weakened; the venom of sin has poisoned his mind, and his faculties are under eclipse. This may be observed, in regard to the concerns of this life. How much toil is needed for the investigation of earthly things, and the acquirement of every kind of worldly wisdom. How men strive after knowledge, and how little of it do they attain. To get some glimpse of the extent of our ignorance is, perhaps, the greatest acquirement of those who are most learned. And when the things of God are considered, the darkness of the understanding is more conspicuous. "The world, by wisdom, knew not God." The noblest efforts of the mind, the toil of sages and philosophers, could not recover the lost knowledge of our Creator and Preserver. And when God revealed Himself, and the Son of his love became incarnate and brought us salvation, sinners, in their blindness, rejected his grace and compassion. "The natural man," saith St. Paul, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." In every age, and in all

regions of the world, apart from the enlightening grace of the Holy Ghost, “Christ crucified,” the great theme of the gospel, has been “unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.” “The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.” “We grope for the wall,” saith the prophet, “like the blind; and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noonday as in the night.”

Look at conscience.

Without entering into an analysis of its powers, it may be described as the faculty which approves or condemns, according to a standard recognized by the understanding. The sanctioning power of the mind, it is not itself a judge of right, but determines whether there is agreement in conduct with what reason accepts as law. Conscience is, therefore, a most important faculty. God’s witness within us, it would, of all our endowments, seem to be least capable of deterioration. Yet the Scriptures declare that “conscience is defiled.” This defilement consists not so much in its sanctioning error, so that men are conscientiously wrong, for this evil is to be charged rather to a perverted judgment, which, in every

unrenewed man, rejecting the law of God, sets up instead a false standard, according to which the moral sense renders its verdict. But the great defect of conscience is her inactivity. Enfeebled by sin, her discernment has been weakened; her quick instinct has been dulled; she is seared by contact with evil, and has lost her nice balance and accurate perception. She fails, boldly, on the instant, and with steadiness, to witness for the right. Our hearts must be “sprinkled from an evil conscience;” our moral sense must be stirred by the Spirit of truth, or we cannot “serve ‘the living God.’”

Observe the memory.

How tenacious of evil, how feeble in “holding fast that which is good!” Hence the anxiety of St. Peter to put Christians “always in remembrance of” Divine things, “though they knew them, and were established in the present truth.” He was aware of the defect of memory in the things of God. He knew how ready we are to forget mercies, and become unmindful of commands and promises, while we too readily retain the most trifling matters, and have, in our memories, a store-house for evil.

Consider the imaginations and thoughts.

“God,” we are told, “saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” And lest this should be supposed to be the description of a period of extraordinary wickedness, such as introduced the flood, the truth is repeated, in almost the same words, “The Lord said, The imagination of man’s heart is evil, from his youth.” “Vain thoughts,” saith the prophet, “dwell within us.” Our fancy is in wild disorder. Who has not been painfully conscious of the corrupt license of an unsanctified imagination? Unpurified by grace, the mind of man is “a chamber of imagery,” where idols are portrayed in hideous deformity, and all is sin and uncleanness. “Cleanse the thoughts of my heart, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,” is the prayer most necessary for us all.

But above all, mark the will and the affections.

“The heart,” saith the prophet, “is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” Our will is in rebellion against God and his law. Our affections are en-

twined around unlawful objects; or, they embrace such as are lawful, in an inordinate degree. Idolatry is the ruling sin of the fallen creature. We have “changed the truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature more than the Creator.” Our Saviour’s indictment against every sinner is, “Ye will not come unto me.” His earnest, pleading entreaty is, “Why will ye die?” The opposition of the will is the essence of sin; and it is invincible, except by the grace of God. God’s people are “made willing in the day of his power;” and his sons “are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” The affections accompanying the will are led by it to embrace and cling to evil; and rebellion is fomented, and kept in force, by hatred. Thus it is that “the carnal mind,” as the Apostle declares in the text, “is enmity against God.” The opposition seated in the will is sustained by the darkness of the understanding, the defilement of conscience, the feebleness of memory in regard to the mercy of God, the vanity of the thoughts, and the wanton disorder of the affections, which, instead of entwining themselves around Christ, and mounting to

God in heaven, grovel upon the earth, and prefer "the creature to the Creator."

Such, my brethren, is fallen man; so fearful is the ruin of transgression. "There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God." "In me," saith the Apostle, "that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." O that sinners, instructed by the Word and Spirit of God, could see themselves as they appear in his sight! as they will stand, unless changed in the day of grace, by the renewing Spirit, before angels and men, at the judgment bar of Christ! There is no such thing as indifference; no neutrality on the part of any, in this matter. "He that is not with me," saith the Lord, "is against me." Disobedience to his will, separation from his cause, rejection of his Son, is enmity. Unless "the carnal mind" be destroyed, and the spiritual mind implanted in its stead; unless there be the new birth of the Spirit from above, producing in you the new creation in Christ Jesus, and changing the child of Adam into the son of God, you remain in hostile opposition, "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise." It does not require high-handed wickedness, to

prove that you are foes. Indifference, impenitence, unbelief, worldliness, will be sufficient to manifest antagonism. "The carnal mind is enmity against God;" and why? "for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;" "so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

But, my dear brethren, there is a gospel to be preached to sinners; a way of access is provided for "all who are afar off." "When we were enemies," saith St. Paul, "we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." "Christ died for the ungodly." His blood "cleanseth from all sin." His righteous obedience to the law, imputed through faith to his believing members, is the ground of "acceptance in the Beloved." His Holy Spirit, the purchase of his cross, renews the children of grace, taking away all their enmity, and restamping them with the likeness of God. And if "to be carnally minded is death, to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Have you then been taught of the Spirit, under the searching light of the Divine law, to know your ruin? Seek at once, and with all your heart, the remedy. Go to Christ. Confess your enmity. Ask Him to pardon

it. Beseech Him to remove it. He is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins. Put your case, then, in his hands. Ask Him, as Advocate with the Father, to " plead your cause, and deliver you." He has left, in his Word, this promise, which you can sue out in faith and prayer before Him : " A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." What more complete provision could be made ? This spirit, which the Spirit of God shall implant, will surely triumph, though " the flesh lusteth against it." " The law in the members " will indeed " war against the law in the mind ; " and the tried believer may have the cry wrung from him, in the contest, " O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " But relief is at hand, and the almighty succor granted shall cause him to exclaim, " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." " Crucified with Christ," he nevertheless shall live ; " and

the life which he lives in the flesh, he shall live by faith in the Son of God." The enmity of the carnal mind shall be destroyed. "The eyes of the understanding being enlightened," the converted child of God shall "know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." His moral sense being purged by the blood of Christ, and stirred by the Spirit of Holiness, he shall "serve God with a pure conscience." His memory, strengthened by the grasp it has upon Jesus and his salvation, will be "filled with the words of God's law," and the recollections of his love. His "thoughts within him" will refresh his soul with contemplations of God; "imaginings that exalt themselves against God will be cast down;" his will, conformed to that of his reconciled Father, will delight to submit to the commandments; affections called back from their wandering, and fastened around the cross, upon Christ our Redeemer, will be "set on things above;" and the whole moral nature, renewed and sustained by grace, will grow in daily resemblance to God. "Old things will have passed away, and all things will have become new."

I do not affirm that this will be the work of an instant. Conversion may, indeed, be sudden, like that of St. Paul, or the jailer at Philippi ; or it may be more gradual and gentle in its operation, like that of Lydia, “whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things which were spoken,” or like that of Timothy, who “from a child had known the holy Scriptures.” But the change being through grace effected, the rebellion of the will being subdued, and the enmity of the heart removed, there will be this blessed growth and progress ; for “the faith of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

The solemn question for each one of us to ask ourselves is, Has this change begun in me ? Has the “enmity” of my “carnal mind against God” been at all removed ? Am I born again ? In sin, I was born into the world ; have I, by the Spirit of Grace, been born into the kingdom of Christ ? Born of water in baptism, dedicated to God, and sealed with the sacrament of the new life, have I been regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus ? Have I felt the intolerable

burden of guilt and corruption ? Have I gone to Christ in faith, to lay that burden upon Him ? Can I trust that in Him I am accepted, through Him forgiven ? Do I find in myself new life — feeble, it may be — struggling against corruption, sometimes wounded, often weak, yet proving its reality in faith and love and obedience ; in clinging to Christ for his free salvation ; communing with Christ, in the Holy Ghost, for comfort and joy and peace ; fighting in Christ and with Him, against every form of sin ; and desiring, above all things, to be conformed in will and deed to the holiness of God ? My brethren, these are the proofs of the Spirit's indwelling. It is this devotion to truth and right and God and holiness, in the face of all temptation and opposition, whether from the devil, the world, or the flesh, which shows that the power of sin is broken, the enmity of the carnal mind exchanged for the life and peace of the spiritual mind. I beseech you, if you know nothing of this, seek it this very day, at the mercy-seat. Go and plead your case, at the foot of the cross, and before the great High Priest, who “ever liveth to make intercession.” To be at “enmity against

Him" is the most terrible of evils. "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that trust in Him."

THE ALTAR TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

“As I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God.” — ACTS xvii. 23.

THESE words are taken from the address of St. Paul to the Athenians, when he was arraigned before the court of Areopagus, on the charge of being a setter forth of strange gods. It is a scene of no ordinary interest : the Apostle of the Gentiles, standing a witness for the truth in the midst of Mar’s hill, in a world-renowned court of antiquity, upon a spot sacred to the Athenians, where tradition taught that even gods had been judged, and where had been heard the loftiest notes of Grecian eloquence. The land of genius and philosophy, though subdued by arms, had not lost her literary glory ; the monuments of her refinement, and surpassing excellence in art, were grouped in elegance around temples and porticoes ; columns and arches were not, as they are now, in crumbling ruins, but lifted themselves beneath the sunlight of an Orient sky, in primeval glory and beauty. It was classic ground upon which the Apostle stood, and every

object of nature and art, in the amphitheatre around him, must have awakened in his cultivated mind some association with the past of this wonderful people.

Nor was the audience gathered before him less remarkable. It did not consist of illiterate Jewish peasants, or rude inhabitants of Roman provinces. Philosophers and rhetoricians, men of genius and learning, were his auditors. There sat the pleasure-loving Epicurean, and at his side the acute and spiritual Platonist ; the Stoic scowled with unnatural sternness from a neighboring portico, while some skeptical or caviling Sophist inquired in tones of contemptuous scorn, What will this babbler say ?

In the midst of such an assembly, the Apostle was to give an account of his doctrine. His spirit was stirred within him, at the idolatry, to which each smoking altar bore witness, and the sin and ignorance, which held captive the populace around him. Classical associations were forgotten ; poetry and art lost, for the moment, their beauty. The enchanting view of Athens, in her unrivaled loveliness, was darkened by the pall of sin, and the dread frown of an incensed Jehovah covered with a cloud

“ the eye of Greece.” The doctrine of Jesus and the resurrection was the absorbing thought in the Apostle’s mind, and to proclaim it, with power, was his single effort. Yet it was not with inconsideration, that the preacher urged his message. He had learnt to become all things to all men, and his sermon before the assembled wisdom of Greece was every way worthy of the occasion. Not that the Apostle laid aside his plainness of speech, or sought to win his hearers with the enticing words of man’s wisdom. It was forcible preaching of Christ that he gave to these intellectual auditors. It was God calling the world to account for its iniquities. It was a Man ordained by Him to be alike the Saviour and the Judge of his creatures, that he made known ; and fearlessly did he attack, even in this brief speech, the errors of each self-conceited theorist before him. Examine his address, and you will see how Epicurean and Stoic and Academician, and all the sects of philosophers, were met on their own ground, and were struck with the sword of the Spirit, in the hand of this champion of the cross. Yet the manner in which this was accomplished, cannot but hold us in admiration. It is in-

spired reason ; it is God-directed intellect which we see in conflict with the gifted and the learned. But it is not my purpose to analyze St. Paul's sermon : I ask attention now to its opening sentences, that you may derive from thence instruction for yourselves. Then, St. Luke tells us, " Paul stood on Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." The expression " too superstitious " is ambiguous, and may have been selected as capable of a double signification ; literally it might be rendered, Ye are given to the fear or worship of demons, or, Ye are very much addicted to religious worship of every kind ; and as this naturally led to superstition, the Apostle may have designed to rest a latent reproof under what might be regarded as commendation. It was a charge, however, whether complimentary or otherwise, which was illustrated by what the speaker had himself observed, as he passed along the thoroughfares of their city.

Not satisfied with the legions of gods

with which their own mythology furnished them, nor yet with additions from Egypt and Rome and other countries, in the midst of their temples and multitude of shrines they had raised an “altar with this inscription, To the unknown God,” confessing thus that they were in need of instruction, and in the darkness of paganism, waiting for the light. Whether this altar to the unknown God was a tribute to the God of the Jews, or, as some have thought, was erected in the excess of superstitious devoteeism, or in acknowledgment of an ignorance which they mourned, it does not concern us to inquire; the fact that there was such an altar, as is described by St. Paul, is mentioned by profane writers, and this is all that is necessary to be known for the purpose which I have in view this morning. Suppose, brethren, the Apostle, instead of wandering through the streets of Athens, had been passing along the thoroughfares of this city, looking in upon the churches, and taking note of the worship which is offered on this holy day. He would not be confronted with the statues of Jupiter or Minerva, or any of the deities of antiquity. But in churches Scriptural in their creed and orthodox in their

worship ; nay, brethren, at once to bring the matter home to yourselves, in this house of God, and in the hearts of some who are here assembled, would he not find many an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God ? All who here pretend to worship, I presume, address their prayers to God. Enlightened by Scriptural teaching, you bend not before the shrine of saint or angel. But who is this God upon whom you call ? Is He a known or an unknown divinity ? Permit me, brethren, to draw near and behold your devotions. Here is an altar which I will examine. At once I see that here is no peculiarly Christian worship. It is not the grateful oblation of a self-condemned sinner, casting himself upon the great sacrifice of Christ, and laying hold, with the hand of faith, upon the altar of the cross. Worship such as this may have been seen in heathen times, in Athens itself, before the light of the gospel shone upon the hill of Mars. It is what men, in their folly and their sin, call natural religion ; as if any religion were natural to him who is by nature a child of wrath, except such as is hateful to a holy God ! A natural religion there indeed was, and we may, under

that name, still remember it ; but it was the faith and worship of unfallen Adam, of man yet retaining his Maker's likeness and walking in his Maker's law. Such a religion becomes us not now ; we want a remedial religion, a faith which sets forth more than man's original relations to God. The gospel of redemption, the approach through a Mediator, is indispensable to such miserable apostates as the members of the human family. Yet some, even in Christian lands, think to reconstruct the ancient altar at which man, unfallen, might have bowed. Inscribed with the name of God, it presents only a vague idea of a Creator and Preserver, and a slight sentiment of gratitude, very feeble and inactive, has called forth their worship. Men often come to stand before God in their own right and in their own virtue, not to confess error and guilt, not to beg for mercy, and seek for grace : but to display, it may be, their own goodness in the royal court ; to justify themselves in the presence of the All-holy, and to give expression to a sentiment which is more akin to poetry than to religion ; if it be not pantheism, into which these worshippers have fallen ; if nature's God is to them

anything more than the impersonation of nature herself. Yet it is not his character, his will, his mercy, or his wrath, on which they dwell. In their conversation they will talk eloquently of "the greatness of Providence," and of the Divine beauty displayed in nature. If they write books, they will have a poetic deity to preside over humanity, and form a background for the creature to show himself upon. If they go forth into the fields, an enrapturing tide of sentiment swells within their souls. If they stray into the church, music or scenic amusement is all that elicits their applause, and they are eloquent on the beautiful and æsthetic in religion. Such men I have often met; their altars have attracted notice; in some cases I have been drawn towards them, with the hope that the fire of real piety might be found burning there, and the incense of true devotion rising up to heaven; but alas! I have often been disappointed, and have been compelled with sorrow to read on their worship, however externally attractive, this inscription, To the unknown God.

If any such should happen now to be in this house of the Lord, any one who accepts

revelation, and would be shocked to have it supposed that he could offer any other than Christian worship, to him I would speak. The fall of man, and his redemption by the Incarnate Son of God, are facts of which he has heard from childhood, and which it has never been his habit to dispute. Prayer, he knows, must be offered through the one Mediator ; and he judges that the evangelical language of our liturgy, dwelling upon the name and merit of our great “ Advocate with the Father,” is quite in accordance with Scripture. Surely, then, we may not expect to find his altar raised to an unknown God ; surely it cannot be against such a worshipper, that the Apostle could lay any charge of ignorance of the object of his devotion. So some of you may be ready to exclaim, but we would beg you to observe before you decide, to look well before you pronounce. There is indeed an appearance of Christianity ; the fire of heaven may seem to glow upon this altar ; but a nearer approach will show it to you shrouded in ignorance, and the coals that should be bright and living, dead and entombed in the ashes of unbelief. Men do not, perhaps, object to the truths of Christianity, they do not deny

the fact of a redemption, they blaspheme not the name of our beloved Saviour ; but what practical use, in their approaches to God, do they make of the Saviour and his plan of deliverance ? Is not the form in which they have been taught to conclude their devotions, “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” the most empty, often, that can rest upon human life ? a stereotyped hypocrisy with which men cover their sin, and delude their souls ? Do all who make use, in public and private, of this precious name of Christ, really draw near to God through Him ? Do they realize, as well as profess, that for such lost and ruined sinners there is, there can be, no other approach ? Do all who plead the name of Christ appreciate the character of Jehovah, as a God of holiness, of justice, and of truth ; who “will not by any means clear the guilty,” who “cannot look upon sin,” and will surely punish every, the least transgression ? Do they believe the declarations of his inspired Word which so plainly set Him forth as the fearful “Avenger of the wicked ?” and have they a grateful recognition of the wonderful plan of wisdom and love, whereby his attributes are harmonized, his holiness vin-

dicated, and a way opened for the exercise of his mercy ? Is it to this plan of salvation for the chief of sinners, by the atoning blood and imputed righteousness of a Divine Substitute and Saviour, received by faith, that they turn for their every hope ? Is it really trusting to Christ's work, and Christ's intercession, that men use his holy name, and seal their petitions with the signet of his love ? Alas ! brethren, truth compels us to say, We fear not ; in some instances we know it is not so. Not all who seem to erect Christian altars, thus worship a reconciled God through a mediating Redeemer ; not all who name in their prayers the name of Jesus, thus rest in his merit and " lay hold of the hope set before them in the gospel."

But I have not yet concluded my observations ; there is another altar that I wish to examine. There seems here to be an advance upon both the preceding. Christian worship, prayer through the one Mediator, is not only professed, but appears to be offered with sincerity. Holy rites, perhaps, are multiplied, times and places and forms are much attended to. The Church's courts are frequented, and our liturgy is,

perhaps, daily repeated. The closet, it may be, is entered. David's habit of morning, even, and noontide prayer, perhaps, is adopted, and we would hope that this was no altar to an "unknown God." Yet, brethren, if we are wise, we will still let the Apostle admonish us ; it was among a people whom he designates, as some have translated it, "very much given to devotion," that he found this altar. "God is a Spirit ; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." A service of love and faith, of penitence and obedience, is what alone He will accept. The form of prayer without the beseeching heart, the bended knee, the reverent gesture, and well chosen words, without the broken and contrite spirit, how hateful are they in his sight ! What inscription will you read upon the altar of the hypocrite, or the formalist ? How will you characterize the worship of the man who thinks to trick Jehovah with profession, as he deceives his fellow-men ; or that other who hopes to purchase forbearance by a heartless round of empty ceremony and tedious ritualism ? What, I ask, can charity herself read upon these altars, but the inscription of the Athe-

nians, To the unknown God? Unknown in his omniscience, unknown in his spirituality, unknown in his holiness. Christianity has, indeed, its outward forms of profession, its divinely appointed sacraments and ordinances, in which the faithful soul will rejoice to manifest its "hidden life," and to seek the increase of its grace; but such is the deceitfulness of our hearts, and our earthliness of disposition, that we must be on the watch, lest we rest in what is only the external manifestation of that spiritual life which is from God, and show our ignorance of our Maker, by offering Him a homage which his holiness cannot do otherwise than reject. "We are the circumcision," saith St. Paul, "which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." It is a fearful thing for one bearing the Christian name to worship "an unknown God;" to have no Scriptural conception of the Divine character, and no spiritual communion with a Heavenly Father. Brethren, let us examine our altars, and see what is the devotion that we render. Do we know God, having been first known and loved of Him in Christ Jesus? Do we know Him by

faith, approaching through his beloved Son ? Do we know Him as a Spirit, requiring a heart service ? Do we know Him as a Father, reconciled in Christ Jesus ? Do we know Him as our Lord and King, rendering unto Him a cheerful and steady obedience ? Do we know Him as a Teacher, anointing us with the blessed "unction" of his Holy Spirit, that we may "know all things" concerning Christ and salvation ? Do we know Him as a Guide, leading and sustaining us all the way of our pilgrimage ? Do we know Him as our Friend, sympathizing with us in our sorrows, helping us in our difficulties, sustaining us in our weakness, consoling us in our afflictions ? In fine, do we know Him as the Bible reveals Him, and the Holy Spirit makes Him known to his beloved and believing people ? and so do we worship Him, rendering no formal and self-righteous homage, but calling upon Him, through Christ, "without ceasing," in our hearts ? St. Paul thus "knew in whom he had believed," and hence his deep concern for those who erected altars to an unknown God ; hence his burning anxiety to "declare unto" them "Him whom they ignorantly worshipped ;" hence his

boldness on Mars' hill, and amid a congregation of philosophers, "preaching Jesus and the resurrection." Brethren, let us desire for ourselves, and all men, the true and saving knowledge of God, in Jesus Christ our Lord ; and if we would raise in our hearts an altar to his worship, let us beseech his Holy Spirit to efface from our guilty souls the Athenian inscription, and write instead thereof, "Increasing in the knowledge of God." Yea, let every one carry away with him to-day the advice of Eliphaz : "Acquaint now thyself with the Almighty, and be at peace ; thereby good shall come unto thee. Thou shalt make thy prayer unto Him, and He shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows."

FORSAKING ALL TO FOLLOW CHRIST.

“They forsook all, and followed Him.” — LUKE v. 11.

SUCH, as you have heard in the Gospel for the day, was the conduct of Simon Peter, James, and John, when by the manifestation of his power, in the miraculous draught of fishes, they had been assured of the Divine mission of Jesus. The first impulse of Peter, at least, had been of a very different kind. No sooner did the “glory of the invisible God,” “in the face of Jesus Christ,” shine upon his heart, than, like many others of whom we have mention in Holy Scripture, he was overwhelmed with the conviction of his guilt; and realized, as he had never done before, the impurity of his nature, in contrast with the holiness of God. The miracle proclaimed the present Deity. “When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” The eye of his mind was pained with the outbursting of the Sun of Righteousness, and when he turned it within, he saw so much

corruption, that he “ abhorred himself ” as vile. The Saviour, however, revealed Himself to heal, and not to confound. The splendor of the Godhead is softened through the veil of a sympathizing humanity, and the awfulness of holiness is tempered by the attractiveness of love. The trembling sinner is assured by the voice of compassion, when Jesus says unto him, “ Fear not.” And here is the winning power of grace. When the guilty soul has found its Saviour, it is drawn with invincible attraction to his feet. The sense of sin which, in our unenlightened state, removed it far from his presence, and made it afraid to look upon his beauty, has become the propelling motive of its approach. “ This man receiveth sinners.” “ He is come to seek and to save that which is lost.” His position, in the centre of our race, is in reference to its ruined condition. His work upon earth, of righteousness and atonement, is performed in behalf of the guilty. His gospel is nothing else but a scheme of Divine wisdom and love, for the recovery of the fallen. His character is made up of the most attractive sympathy and tenderness. His words are sweet and comforting promises to

the miserable and vile. If man were not an apostate from holiness, the religion of the cross would not be the faith for his soul. If the child of Adam were not sick and wounded, the balm of the Holy Spirit would not be consoling to his heart. It is only because the world is confident in its self-righteousness, and there is little appreciation of our real condition in the sight of God, that the messengers of peace and ambassadors of Christ have so often to exclaim, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" I wish you to remark the beautiful arrangement of the gospel plan for bringing the sinner to self-consciousness, and making him know the evil of his heart and life. It is by the revelation to him of Jesus; by placing the Son of God before him, and centering his regard upon his Divine, yet human person. It is true that in his office of the Reprover of the world of sin, the Holy Ghost uses the law as a great instrument of conviction; the thunders of Sinai awaken in the soul the echoes of condemnation, and the sinner stands guilty by the verdict of his own conscience. But if the law were to act alone, it could only conduct

to despair. Its lightning would blast ; its flames consume. The law, therefore, in the Spirit's hand, is " the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," and it is by revealing Jesus to the convicted soul, that the sense of sin is deepened, even while the assurance of pardon is conveyed. Think what must have been the effect upon the woman who was brought to our Lord in the temple, accused by those who had taken her in crime, and condemned by the law of Moses to death, when Jesus, as the Saviour of sinners, refusing the office of the judge, spoke to her in the accents of compassion, and bade her " Go, and sin no more." Did not those tones of kindness penetrate a heart, which before, perhaps, had been bold and callous ? Was not shame by their compassionate utterances deepened into grief ? Was it not the gentleness of that Divine presence, and the accents of love from holy lips, that awakened the first feelings of contrition, and bedewed her cheek with the scalding tear of penitence ? Can you not conceive that from that interview with the Redeemer, there went forth an influence of Divine grace, powerful over her future life ? It was not so much reproof ; it was not in-

dignant chiding, and heartless condemnation, that could have moved her ; but the look of Jesus she could not forget ; the melting pity of his eye, the tender compassion of his speech, the forgiving love of his whole demeanor, she never could banish from her heart. The Christ had entered there, with his power to cleanse and to save ; and all her hopes and all her desires were to Him. If she was saved from her deep degradation and crime, it was through that personal contact with forgiving holiness to which her accusers, armed with the law for her destruction, had unwittingly brought her. It is this attractive power of Christ's presence that we see in our text, using the sense of sin, which his miraculous power had awakened, and which in its first impulse of shame and degradation would have escaped his gaze, to bind the convicted soul to Himself as all its consolation and hope ; so that it will be his at any cost, seeing no other centre of love and happiness, and only too grateful to be invited, in his own tender accents, to " forsake all and follow Him." Nor is the experience, my hearers, of God's people in our own day and generation different. Christ is the

great attractor of guilty souls. His own prediction and promise is hereby fulfilled: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." There is no power in the world like this of a personal Saviour. You may try, if you please, to reform and elevate men by other means. You may attempt the force of reason, the attractiveness of human affection, the power of shame, and the interest of self-love, but each and all will fail, except as they are combined in heavenly proportion in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the stone that God hath laid in Zion, upon which to rebuild the ruined temple of human nature. But on the other hand, how often and how completely successful has this "only name under heaven given among men" been in the recovery of the lost, and the building up, in the new and spiritual life, of those whom Satan has cast down. How many have "forsaken all and followed Him," to find life, and peace, and joy to their souls.

And now, if you have any idea of the great central influence of our Christianity, which, like the orb in which we live, by a great law of spiritual force, attracts ever to

itself, you will take pleasure in observing how this power acts, in enabling us to cast off everything that would keep us from the embrace of Mercy, so that of all who are born of the Spirit of God and united in Him to Christ, the sum of their experience may be written, in the words of our text, "They forsook all and followed Him."

(1.) And what, my brethren, at the outset, is more difficult to forsake, than all our self-righteousness? It is this, preëminently, that keeps the sinner from the Saviour. The natural man is full of his own righteousness. He is ignorant that he is an offender, or, at the best, has no conception of the extent of his departure from the commandments of God. And even where there has been conviction of guilt, still the heart is so "deceitful and desperately wicked," that it is ever devising excuses, and making pleas in behalf of the offender. It is an impossible thing, except by the grace and Spirit of God, to bring a man to make a full acknowledgment of his transgression. Some, who propose to come to Christ, bring with them the wretched works of their own ungodliness, and expect these to make no small part of the ground of their

acceptance in the sight of heaven. Ministers who are called to sick and dying beds, and share men's thoughts in their serious moments, are often shocked at the wonderful hold that an opinion of their own worth, in some thing or other, has upon the minds of many who have sat for years under the preaching of the gospel of free grace ; or rather, I should say, we would be shocked, if, alas ! we did not see so much of the same folly in our own hearts. To make a sinner know his vileness, and cast from him every rag of self-righteousness, nothing save the revelation of Christ by the Spirit of Grace is sufficient. My hearers, turn your eyes upon the crucified Son of God, and learn to forsake all opinion of your own merits, while you see Him, the only Saviour. It is not looking into your own hearts that will accomplish this, so much as the looking to Jesus. If you are attracted to his person, see his holiness, and understand his work of vicarious righteousness and atonement, then you will begin to know that all your righteousness is as filthy rags. Then you will realize that it is spiritual nakedness that is to be clothed upon with Christ, and utter ruin and spiritual death, which, in Him, is

to find life eternal ; and so, by the sight of his excellency, and works of wisdom and love, will you be brought to forsake all self-righteousness, and all that you can hope for in the way of acceptance and salvation, in the simplicity of self-renouncing faith and holy, humble trust, to " follow Him."

(2.) Nor, my hearers, is it more easy for the heart of man to forsake all its self-dependence. It would seem as if this were the essence of sin. To " be as gods " was the bait held out by Satan to our first parents ; and self-reliance is the fruit of transgression. How difficult is it to bring men to realize their spiritual weakness ! How little do we know of our corruption and proneness to err ! What slight sense have most men of the force of depravity ! How many trust in the firmness of resolution, the strength of reason, the effort of their own spirit ! Even the children of God have no adequate idea of the desperate wickedness and deceitfulness of the corrupted heart ; and too often forget the needed aid of the Holy Ghost. Men are either driven to despair by the repeated failure of their unaided efforts ; or they are lighted up into most dangerous presumption, through the

ignorance that is in them. The voice of Christ must be heard inviting to his refuge of grace ; offering the strength of his Spirit, and saying, “ My grace is sufficient for you, my strength is made perfect in weakness ; ” experience must have taught that “ we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves,” before there will be that forsaking of all self-dependence, and that simple leaning upon the promised aid of the Holy Ghost, in which is seen the true following of Christ. And it is by the attractions of his person, and the gentleness of his invitations, that the Saviour seeks to make us strong. “ Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat ; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.” “ I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.” It is in the leaning upon words of cheer like these, while we forsake all hope in our own power, that the true following of Christ consists.

(3.) Nor is self-seeking a thing that, without a struggle, is altogether forsaken. The outward exhibition of man’s sin is that he has departed from the true aim of his existence, the glorifying God, and is intent upon all kinds of lower objects, centering at

last in himself. It may be the world, or the flesh, that is obeyed ; and the forms of the service are ever varying. But the evil is, that it is not God who is looked to. It is not his honor that men have at heart. His kingdom is not that which they seek ; but “their own things,” in the path of wealth, or ambition, or ease, or pleasure. However varied the fashion of the shrine, the idol is found to bear the stamp of the creature ; and himself, not God, is glorified. Now it is no outward severing of ourselves from the world, that will accomplish a change here. It is not the form of the worship, but the idolatry itself that is the sin. Men may be separated from the world, and have an eye to God’s glory, and be seeking his honor, while outwardly they are mingled in the necessary business of the present life. On the other hand, the monastery and the hermitage will not exclude worldliness and self-worship. Daniel glorified God while he was at the head of the government of Babylon ; and Jerome confessed that the world, the flesh, and the devil followed him with increased power into the solitudes of the wilderness. It is, my hearers, nothing but the grace of Jesus, drawing out our souls in

devotion to Him, that can cure any man of self-seeking. The more we see Him by faith, the more constantly shall we follow Him, "forsaking all" for his sake, whether our lot be seclusion and retirement, or we be surrounded by the crowd of men, and feel the hourly pressure of public care. The only thing is, our hearts must go forth to our heavenly Friend, and his glory must be before all else, in our regard.

(4.) And can this be done without the forsaking, through grace, of that most difficult of all things to surrender, our self-will? Many, brethren, will be ready to give up property and time and outward service, but God demands the heart, and He requires all the heart. Nothing must be kept back; the sacrifice must be entire. Every thought must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Self-will is the darling of the soul, which must be placed entire upon the altar, if the service is to be complete. All sin in its essence is this, that we oppose the will of God; and the heights of holiness are reached, when the renewed soul is brought through grace into complete and absolute submission, so that God's will is ours, in all things. If, then,

we would follow Jesus, there is nothing we must so much renounce and abhor, as our own will. And this, which cannot be, but by grace, shall be accomplished in us by the Holy Spirit, as we learn to love Christ more. You know what it is, through the force of human affection, to have your will blended with that of a friend. Now God has placed beside you his own dear Son, to be to you "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother;" and it is by drawing near to Him, communing with Him in love, having a constant intercourse with Him in prayer and Scripture and other means of grace, tasting the delights of his companionship in the Spirit, that your will is, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, to be conformed to his will. Love is the parent of obedience. "If ye love me," saith our Lord, "keep my commandments;" the increasing affection will make those commandments "not grievous;" and even where the Divine will opposes ours in the most sensitive parts of our natures, and goes entirely contrary to our most cherished desires, the excellency of Christ's presence will be so great, and the beauty of the King's countenance so attractive, and the

sweetness of the Master's communion so precious, that we will forsake all and follow Him.

Such, my hearers, is the spirit of our religion. Such is the character of the service which Christ, standing in our midst, seeks at our hands. If we would be his; the response of our hearts, through renewing grace, must be full and ready. We must "count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord," and with our faith resting on his work, and the gaze of our hope fastened upon his reward, we must say, —

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee ;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be.
Perish, every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hoped, or known ;
Yet, how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are still my own."

In giving up all for Jesus, we receive all in Him. What we forsake is that which would ruin us. What we receive is that which constitutes our bliss. Permit me then, my hearers, to ask how it is with you ? How have you chosen ?

Think what Jesus forsook for you, and

say what are you forsaking for Him ? Think not that you can render Him a half service ; the demand is for the surrender of all : all self-righteousness, self-dependence, self-seeking, self-will : all, in short, that is not of God, but of the world. Who among you, my friends, will now be so attracted by the loveliness of Christ, who has offered you, in the gospel, to be your friend and Master, that you will " forsake all and follow Him ? " You only forsake a world which will soon forsake you, and take in exchange One who will never leave you. May God enable you to make the decision of the Apostle in the text, and " follow Christ " to his eternal kingdom and glory.

AARON STANDING BETWEEN THE DEAD AND THE LIVING.

“And Aaron stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed.” — NUMBERS xvi. 48.

WHAT a subject for the pencil of a master! The picture is glowing with life in the graphic sketch of Moses. The camp of Israel is the scene. An angry crowd of murmurers have gathered around the law-giver; they complain of the destruction of Korah and his company, for rebellion against the Lord. Excited by their supposed wrongs, they swell in noisy tumult, and, like a sea of troubled waters, pour themselves, from all parts of the encampment, towards the tents of the Levites. In the centre of the picture stands the tabernacle, with the pillar of cloud resting above it; and soon all eyes are attracted there, for “the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared.” Flashes of light shot forth in anger, and announced the Lord rising up to judgment. “And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the

congregation ;" but ere there is time to contrast the calm dignity of these inspired leaders with "the madness of the people" arrayed against them, there is a voice from the cloud. "And the Lord spake with Moses saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a minute. And they fell upon their faces." They felt that prayer was their only resource. Justice was ready to break forth, and mercy must be sought to throw herself in the path of deserved vengeance. And most significant is the conduct of Moses ; he does not only intercede, though his prostration in the dust is the attitude of the mediator, but he commands that to be done which, by showing upon what acceptable intercession for the guilty can alone be based, at once makes his mediation successful. "And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them ; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation ; and behold the plague was begun among the people ; and he put

on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed." What a scene, if some master should portray it on the canvas ! the surging and angry mob, struck by the vengeance of God ! their proud waves of opposition to his will, stayed by the angel of death ! the strong man, stricken to the earth, writhing in anguish, exchanging in a moment the shout of tumult for the feeble sigh of death ! women clinging in agony to the stiffened arm, upon which, in health, they had leaned for support ; looking with unutterable grief into the face, which a moment since glowed with animation, now fixed and cold in death, the flashing eye dull, the scowl of passion gone forever, the fierce countenance stamped with the seal of pain ; aye, and while they gazed, amid the tears of horror which fell upon their dead, feeling the icy hand of the destroyer on their own hearts, and hearing the summons to eternity, sounding through their souls ! children clinging to the insensible forms of the mothers who bore them ; or themselves swooning with a sudden collapse of the powers of their infant life ! What riot of

death ; what a field of slaughter ; what wide-spread desolation ! the camp which was full of irrepressible activity, is now the city of the dead ; and like lava poured from the seething crater of a volcano, the stream of death rushes on, over all that is strong, and noble, and lovely ! and just by the last sufferer, as with contortion of limb and pale hue of agonized countenance, he embraces his sudden doom, stands the high priest clothed in the vestments of his office, with mitre on his brow, and jeweled breast-plate girded on his bosom ; the bells of his robe shaken in his haste, and his face lifted to heaven, with a pleading look for mercy, as he sprinkles the blood of atonement, and swings the censer of prayer. I can almost see him, as he rises amid that heap of slain, the sole barrier to the wrath of God, the only hope of the stricken camp. What a moment of thrilling interest, as “ he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed ! ” Let the scene be engraved upon your minds, for it is full of instruction ; it is a parable of grace, it is a type of redemption by the Son of God.

The camp of Israel, on this occasion of high-handed rebellion “ against Moses and

against God," is no inapt representation of a world of sinners, in arms against God and his law; opposed in heart to his holy enactments, leagued together to resist his will; and only the more outrageously angry where the violation of his commands has brought down judgment, and they suffer under the stroke of the Divine rod. "Our God is a consuming fire;" He "cannot look upon iniquity," and "will by no means clear the guilty." "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished," and the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. "No sooner did sin enter our world, than the plague began." Nothing but the mediation of the Prophet "like unto Moses," the Son of God himself, can avert the "wrath" of the All-holy. "The Lord," saith the prophet Isaiah, "saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his own arm brought salvation unto Him, and his righteousness it sustained Him." As Moses was sent for the deliverance of Israel, and made the mediator between Jehovah and their guilty tribes, so "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son,"

and there is “one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” But his intercession is not the pleading of cries and tears and entreaties. It is not that He lies prostrate before the mercy-seat, imploring compassion. His mediation is based upon his atonement; the intercession on the right hand of God is the result and consummation of Christ’s priestly work upon the cross. His plea for the guilty, by which He would avert the stroke of justice and turn aside the death which is the penalty of sin, is his atoning sacrifice. He stands, the “High Priest, passed into the heavens,” and cries with a voice which finds an echo in the will and purpose of the God-head who planned redemption, “Deliver from going down into the pit: I have found a ransom.” And thus, my brethren, may the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ towards his rebellious but blood-bought people, while, as their great High Priest, He ever liveth to make intercession, be most truly described in the words of our text: “He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed.” He is the only effectual barrier, placed by the appointment of God between the out-flashing

fire of consuming justice, and the unprotected head of the guilty sinner. Wrath is “gone forth,” the “plague is begun ;” the deadly effects of sin may be seen on every side — suffering, sorrow, disease, death, eternal ruin ; a flood of wrath is pouring its fiery billows upon a fallen earth. Terrible are the ravages of sin ; fearful the destruction of body and soul. It is a very carnival of death, and there is no stay or hindrance to the desolation, except where the great High Priest swings his censer, and with the blood of atonement sprinkles and protects his believing Church. Could your spiritual vision be enlightened, you would see the whole theatre of this world surrendered to the tragedy of death, except where the true Aaron lifts his cross, and cries, in the voice of loving welcome, “Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” “Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Now I would ask you to-day, brethren, to look upon this picture. O, that I had the power to delineate, with such shades and colors as would fix your adoring faith upon

the Son of God, the death of the sinner and the intervention of the Saviour ! It is a theme not only to fire the fancy, but to take captive the heart.

First, I ask you to look upon the dark background of the scene ; but you must not be content to gaze as a mere spectator ; it is your own portrait, with that of all your fellow-sinners of Adam's race, that is drawn by the pencil of the Spirit. I stand in this pulpit to deal with realities, in which you are all personally concerned. And, my friends, there is nothing so real, or in which you are so deeply interested, as the rebellious attitude of the human race toward God. To one who is not too entirely engrossed with the act of sin, in which he is engaged with his fellows, to have any regard to God and our relations to Him, and especially to all who are instructed from the pages of God's Word, the mass of mankind must appear as a great tumultuous mob of opposers of the Divine will. Individual transgression combines, with no other order than that of hostility to the Lord, in a world-wide antagonism to holiness and truth. With will perverted, and passions excited against the Divine law, from all the hab-

itations of the sons of men there pours forth a crowd of murmurers against God. The authority of his commandment has for them no power ; the indications of his providence, which, like the pillar of cloud resting above the camp, may be read in all around us, can neither awe nor restrain them. Self-assertion, persistency in doing their own pleasure, and discontent at any of the checks or judgments of Jehovah mark, and combine in one league and fellowship of sin, all the children of Adam. Various tribes and families, with great diversity of individual bent and choice, unite in the world-wide protest against the sovereign dominion of God. What a spectacle must this apostate earth present to the angels and hierarchies of heaven, as, from the battlements of the skies, they view the rebellion and disorder of our race ! What a view must be spread before the omniscient eye of God, as, from his throne of glory, He inspects the work of his hands ! “ They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together be-

come filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Can we wonder, that there is "wrath gone out from the Lord;" and that "the plague," which is engendered of sin, and which ends in eternal death, "is begun?" My fellow sinners! are you not conscious of that plague? Do you not see it in the disorders of society, in the social evils, which everywhere mark the habitation of men; in the wars, the discord, the injustice, the rapacity of the human race? Is it not tracked by the ravages of disease, the woes of the bereaved, the darkness and corruption of the grave? Especially do you not recognize its fearful taint upon your own soul? Which of you is without sin? Who does not groan under corruption and spiritual death? If any who are yet unrenewed by the Spirit of Grace, are not awakened to the terrors of their condition, this very insensibility is the most aggravated symptom of the disease; "conscience is defiled;" the mind is wrapped in the gloom of death. Alas for us, if only the whelming judgments of God awaken us to our peril; if the besom of destruction sweep us away, ere we have been aroused to see the only, but sure deliverance!

Second. "Consider," saith St. Paul to the Hebrews, "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." It is his presence in the foreground of the picture, standing like Aaron, "between the dead and the living," which gives all the light and beauty to the scene. Let St. John describe to you how the colors are blended in the glory of his person. "I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." It is this true Aaron, standing in the midst of his blood-bought Church, which gives to any of the sons of men the life of grace and salvation. The "living" live in Him who separates them from the dead. His person is the only line of demarcation; his work of

atonement the sole ground of deliverance. He Himself is the door and the way, by which every believing soul “passes from death unto life.” It is his ever-living intercession, which secures the believing Church from the doom of the guilty world. “He is,” saith the Apostle, “the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” And “Once, in the end of the world, hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” All that was prefigured by Aaron and his priesthood, the smoking altar and burning incense and sprinkled blood of the Jewish ritual, is accomplished in the atonement and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. The law by Moses detects the guilt of man, and proclaims the wrath of God; unable itself to “justify the ungodly,” it calls aloud to the High Priest, “Make an atonement;” and it is not, and cannot be, until He stands “between the dead and the living,” that “the plague is stayed.” Now, my brethren, I would ask you, Do you receive this? Conscious of the wrath, which is justly gone

forth against your transgressions, what is your hope of deliverance? Death is all around. The strong and the weak fall before his scythe; what will you do when God riseth up? and when He visiteth, what will you answer Him? O, my brother, ere, amid the ranks of the dying, you sink into eternal night, I would take you by the hand, I would whisper in your ear, "Behold the Lamb of God;" I would point your dim and glazing eye to the great form of the High Priest of our profession, as He stands "between the dead and the living," as He lifts the cross as the symbol of hope, and points to heaven as the throne of his meditation, the Holy of holies from which He has rent the veil, that there may be free access, in recovered life, to the presence of a reconciled God. I would solemnly press home upon each one of you this inquiry, and pray God by his Spirit to carry it to your heart, Upon which side of the death line are you standing? It is marked out by the far-reaching shadow of the cross. Here, where rebellious, murmuring crowds of unconverted sinners are lying in the cold embrace of spiritual death, the sentence is, "Condemned already;" "and this is the condem-

nation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." And there, "passed from death unto life," with the great High Priest between them and wrath, swinging his censer, and sprinkling his blood of atonement; there, where the Spirit, descending from the cross on which Immanuel hung; quickened, by the new birth from above, the souls bought with blood; there is breathed, as in the sweet voices of the winds of heaven, the assurance penetrating every heart with which the Spirit bears witness, "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Is that assurance yours, as you exercise faith in the Son of God? Do you rest only on the work of Christ? Has his blood cleansed you from all sin? My dear hearers, I am inquiring after a fact, the result of which is, that the plague of sin is stayed; stayed in its power now, and in its fearful consequences hereafter. Christ stands to-day between the dead and the living; his face averted from those, his countenance of love beaming upon these. And as his censer swings, and the day of his grace is not ended, I ask, On which side of his person

and work do you stand ? are you with, or against the Son of God ? are you sheltered by his cross, or more deeply condemned by his rejected sacrifice ? “ Between the living and the dead,” He will stand on that great day of judgment, when, to those on his right hand He shall say, “ Come, ye blessed ;” and to those on his left hand, who sought Him not on earth, “ Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.” Then will the states of life and death be fixed forever, and by Christ will the sentence proceed.

V

JESUS IN THE MIDST OF THOSE GATHERED IN HIS NAME.

“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” — MATTHEW xviii. 20.

THE presence of God is the life of the universe. To his rational creatures the loving consciousness of that presence is the highest joy. The curse of guilt is, that it blinds to his glory, and makes sinners tremble at the nearness of Jehovah. The awful judgment denounced against those that “know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” is, that they shall be “punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” The consummation of glory in the “New Jerusalem” is, that “the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” With this hope, the hearts of the children of grace are full; to this they look forward, when in the earnestness of faith they exclaim — in response to the promise of their Lord, “Surely I come

V

quickly" — "Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus."

But there are, my brethren, for believing hearts, foretastes of that joy, before the Lord "shall come to be glorified in his saints and admired in all them that believe."

"The kingdom of heaven is within you," and "among you," and while the Church is in the wilderness, surrounded by enemies, exposed to trials, and toiling in pilgrimage to the Canaan of rest, the pillar of fire and cloud is before her, and the promise to every trusting heart is sure. "My presence shall go with thee." The removal of guilt from believers in Christ, so that they may not fear the presence of God, and the extermination of corruption, that they may enjoy his communion, is that work of grace which, begun here, shall be perfected in glory. Only through redemption could it be accomplished for sinful creatures. Our first parents, after their transgression, when they "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day," "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord," amongst the trees of the garden; and ever since, through all the generations of Adam's corrupt race, the manifestation of God to the wicked has been a "consuming fire."

But with “a Daysman,” who can lay his hand upon both God and the sinner, and turn away alike the righteous anger of the one, and the guilty fear of the other, “A new and living way is opened” unto us, to the presence of the Lord, and “through Him, we have access by one Spirit, unto the Father.” “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself,” and his presence is now indeed the life and joy of his people. The realization of that presence by faith, and the communion which follows, while we “walk with God,” and “sit in heavenly places,” and “have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ,” are the privileges of those who are “born of God,” and “made near, by the blood of the cross.”

The text shows us one form of this intercourse, and I desire by God’s grace to dwell upon it, at this first Lenten service, so that it may be to us, at all those meetings for prayer, a reality and a delight. “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” It is the promise to social worship; the sure word of Scripture, upon which we rest united prayer. With that beautiful fitness

which marks our Liturgy, this assurance of Christ, enlarged, by the incorporation of the promise of the verse preceding the text, into a pledge of “granting our requests,” is made in the language of St. Chrysostom the closing plea of our “morning and evening prayer;” and could we possess our hearts with the truth of this declaration, our meetings in the congregations would be occasions of joy, while, by faith, we beheld Jesus “in our midst;” and “of his fullness, received grace for grace.” To aid us in this, let us consider the blessing that is here made sure to all believing hearts. “Where two or three are gathered together in my name.” The numbers assembling are, you will notice, made the smallest possible, that there may always be the faith of acceptance, where more than one of God’s people unite for prayer. Not only in the crowded temple, but with the “two or three,” which was Christ’s chosen number, on several occasions when, on earth, He was pleased to admit his disciples to special nearness to Himself — will He be present in worship.

It is not the place, or the ceremony, or the mode of prayer, or the person conducting it, that ensures the blessing. But the

promise is to Christ's people gathered in his name,—whether assembled on the mountain-side, or in rocks and caves and catacombs, or on the bosom of the great deep, or in the upper chambers, or anywhere throughout this grand temple of earth which is all dedicated to God; with its canopy of blue, and its star-studded dome, and its furniture of hill and dale; with its warbling of feathered songsters, and the rich melody of human voices; with its music of winds and waves, its sounding cataracts, and its yet more impressive silence; with its splendor of sunshine, putting to shame the flickering light of men, and its deep solemn shade of mountain and forest; with its consecrated altar, the blood-sprinkled heart of redeemed man, and its priests, those whom Christ hath breathed upon by his Spirit, and "made kings and priests unto God," through faith in his name.

It is to believing, praying spirits everywhere, that the promise is sealed; only it must be in Christ's name that they come, and in Jesus that they trust, and on Him that they depend, and Him that they seek, and through Him that they ask; and the fullness of his grace will be there, as sure as

when, from the magnificent temple at Jerusalem, the glory of the Shekinah burst forth on the day of dedication, from the Holy of Holies, so that king and priests and Levites fled from the present Jehovah. To the Samaritan who met Him at the well, our Lord's own word was, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

Everywhere is God's temple, if there are only hearts there that burn with love, and send up in faith, through the one Mediator, the blood-sprinkled sacrifice of prayer and praise. Your care, when you come together, beloved, should not be only for the arrangement of the outward sanctuary — though this should surely be decent, and expressive, as far as may be, of your reverent love for your Lord — but your great anxiety should be, that "in the name of Jesus," ye are come; that your need of Him has brought you to seek his presence; and your faith in his person, and work, and atonement, and intercession, is lively and active.

We should all ask ourselves, brethren, as we take our place in any assembly of God's people, Why am I here? what are the motives that constrain me? what are the ends that I have in view? what are the means that I am now about to employ? Is it "Christ," who is Himself the answer to every question that I can make of my heart? Sought by Him, saved by Him, consecrated to Him, desiring to live to Him, and to commune with Him, have I come? Do I say with Jacob, at Bethel, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven"? Is it any wonder, that Christ is absent from our churches and our appointed times of prayer, when there are so many false and sinful motives which assemble those who call themselves his people? Can you be surprised that He does not sit in the gay circle of fashion, or manifest Himself in love to the worldly and indifferent? Can you wonder that they who come only from habit, or who are dragged thither by custom, do not meet the King in his courts? That they who bring with them hearts full charged with care and pleasure, that they who come to gaze idly at their fellows, or converse pleasantly with

companions, or sit in the seat of the scorner, or sleep, it may be, with the indolent, or engage in anything else rather than reverent worship and communion, find no blessing, where, indeed, they claim no Scriptural promise? Remember, it is not outward profession, which a heart-searching God will ever be satisfied with. "In the name of Christ," does not mean only in the garb of disciples, disguised, it may be, as Christians, while in truth we are wholly the world's. It does not mean with his name upon our lips, or in our prayer books, while our hearts are set on idols; but it implies the sincere and humble approach of sinners, who feel their need of the Saviour, and with a sense of guilt, and faith in his blood and righteousness, come to plead out before God the blessings of redemption.

How is it to-day, my beloved hearers? How have you come up at this Lenten call to the house of God? Search your hearts; see to your motives. Have you real petitions to bring? have you personal application to make to the King, as He sitteth upon his throne, and holdeth forth to his blood-bought Church, the Spouse and Beloved of his heart, the golden sceptre and acceptance?

If so, then let me aid you this morning in obtaining a view of the blessing which is covenanted to you. It is such, indeed, as heaven itself affords no greater. It is the foretaste of the bliss of saints ; it is participation in the joys of angels, who stand around the throne, and see the face of God. Of the “two or three, gathered together in his name,” Jesus says, “I am in the midst of them.” He, with whom his people departed from this earth are, in paradise ; He, before whom angels, “thousand thousands minister,” and “ten thousand times ten thousand, stand ;” He is with us, not seen by eyes of sense, but near to the gaze and grasp of faith. Suppose it were otherwise, and that, with mortal vision, we could see the King in his beauty.” How impressive, how awful, would be the sight ! Such a vision we shall surely have, when He shall “come in the clouds, and all the holy angels with Him.”

How soon that may be, we know not ; what surpassing beauty shall there break upon our raptured sight, we cannot conceive. If we are the sons of God, “We know, indeed, that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him

as He is." But now, "having not seen, his believing people love Him," and his presence and communion are foretastes of glory. Christ was present once, on earth, with his disciples, not only in his time of humiliation, and during his life and ministry, as He passed through the world of sorrow to the cross ; but after He was "declared to be the son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead," and just before He "ascended up on high, leading captivity captive." Let us think what that presence was, and we shall come to know something more definite of this.

Open the gospels, and read the narrative of the life of Jesus, from Bethlehem to Calvary, and you will learn much of the blessing of which I am speaking. You will see unfolded in daily activity, amid the affairs of the world, and in the companionship of men, the true humanity of the Son of God. His character is delineated, by the touch of inspiration, in the atmosphere of light and goodness that surrounds Him. His heart will be opened to you, in his words of love and deeds of benevolence. His tenderness and compassion will be recognized in his sighs and groans ; and his overflowing sym-

pathy, in his tears. "Never man spake like this man." "He receiveth sinners." "Behold how He loved!" "I find no fault in Him." "Truly, this was a righteous man." These are testimonies, not of friends, but of enemies ; of the officers sent to take Him, of the Pharisees, of Pilate, of the centurion who was in command at his crucifixion : what then must have been the judgment and appreciation of his disciples ? of Peter, who confessed Him so nobly ; of the sons of Zebedee, who would sit on his right hand and his left ; of Matthew, who left all, and followed Him ; of Mary, who sat at his feet ; of John, who leaned on his breast ?

What a friendship was that which their privileged souls had with Jesus ! How must they have rejoiced in his love, feasted on his words of wisdom, rested in his sympathy, and been guided and cheered by his intercourse ! You remember how they shrank from the possibility of losing Him. The grief that surcharged their souls is reflected to us in those words of their Lord, "None of you asketh me, Whither goest Thou ? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart." "Let not your heart be troubled, neither

let it be afraid." They could not ask, for they could not bear the thought of his departure.

They could not endure that all that sweet intercourse should come to an end; that those eyes, so full of love, should rest upon them no longer, whose one look drove the sinning Peter to "weep bitterly;" that that strong yet gentle hand, which had plucked them from many a danger, and touched them in many a blessing, and grasped them ever with the warm pressure of the truest friendship, should be cold in death; that that tongue, which had spoken words of invitation and warning and promise, which had cheered them amid sorrow, and counseled them in danger, and bid them not tremble at death, should be hushed; that those feet, which had "gone about doing good," should be pierced and still, and bound with the grave-clothes; that He, who was the centre of their love and unity, their Master and Teacher and Lord, should be taken from them; and they orphans, in a world of trial, should be without his fellowship and converse. This was a thing hard to be borne, and the shrinking of heart at the thought shows us what a companionship was that of

Jesus when on earth, a wayfarer, He dwelt with men.

But this was before his passion ; turn a few pages in the sacred story, and read again. What glimpses of joy are in those forty days of his sojourn, after his resurrection ! He had now put on his spiritual body ; that in which He pleads for us, before the throne on high ; with which He ascended from Bethany, and with which “ his feet shall stand again on the Mount of Olives.” It seemed a recovered loss, and this gave greater zest to the universal joy. When He revealed Himself to Magdalen, it was no wonder that she would have touched Him, since she knew not yet the higher blessing of his kingdom. When He “ met,” with his “ All hail,” those women returning from the sepulchre, it is not strange that “ they held Him by the feet and worshipped Him.” Those two disciples on the way to Emmaus — it cannot surprise you that their “ hearts burned within them, while He talked with them by the way, and opened to them the Scriptures.” What joy must have taken the place of the first “ affright,” when He stood in the midst of the disciples, and showed them his hands and his feet,

and said, “Peace be unto you.” Can you marvel that Thomas cried out, at the sight of Him, “My Lord and my God !” Do you not expect that John shall know Him at once by his voice, as He calls to them from the sea-shore ? and how like Peter it was, to cast himself into the sea in order to reach Him, as soon as He was recognized. And who shall describe the joy of that assemblage of brethren on the “mountain in Galilee,” where “Jesus had appointed them ” a meeting ? or who shall express the interest and love with which they hung upon his words, as He “spake of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God ” ?

Here, in all these scenes, may you learn something of the preciousness of the presence of Jesus with his people. Yet He told them plainly that higher blessings were in store. “Touch me not,” He said to the loving Mary, “for I have not yet ascended to my Father.” “It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you,” was his word of consolation to his mourning disciples ; and they understood, in time, how this

was true, when his pleading at the mercy-seat procured for them the Holy Ghost, by whom He is present with his Church in all ages and at all times and places, with the same tenderness, and nearness, and compassion, and personal regard, which distinguished Him when He was on earth ; proving that He is indeed for all his saints Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

Now, brethren, this is the testimony of the disciple whom He loved, by which He would win us to the like enjoyment of a never absent Lord : “ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us : and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

Yes, my friends, that fellowship with God in Christ is ours, that presence of Emmanuel is with us still. Not more surely to the disciples in the upper room, or upon the Sea of Tiberias, or on the mountain in Galilee, or at Bethany or Capernaum, was Jesus present, than “ where two or three are

gathered together in his name," He is now "in the midst of them."

He is here to-day, if but two hearts among us are humbly waiting for his presence. He is here, not bodily, not visibly, not in the sacrament, or upon the altar, as some say; not in one part of the church, more than in another; not in the church at all, as a building set apart and consecrated for any such purpose, for "God dwelleth not in temples made with hands; heaven is his throne, and earth is his footstool;" but truly, and by covenant promise, present by the Holy Ghost, and in the hearts of his regenerate and believing people. "Know ye not," saith the Apostle, "that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" It is by the Holy Spirit whom He hath sent, that the Saviour, who is in his humanity before the throne of heaven, yet dwells in the midst of his Church on earth. That Spirit is "the Spirit of Christ," as "taking of the things of Christ and shewing them unto us." It is his office, as "the Comforter," to represent Christ; to be his Vicar and Vicegerent, to bring his people near to Him, and Him to them, that He may "dwell in their hearts by faith."

God, the trinity in unity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is indeed everywhere present. He fills heaven and earth, He fills all things. But as Christ, the Son of the Father, in the economy of mediation, bears a peculiar relation, as Brother and Saviour, to sinful, but redeemed men who believe in Him, so the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of Christ, in addition to that Divine and essential omnipresence which He possesses as one with Father and Son, bears a special and official relation to the believing Church. He fills it with his presence, as the Spirit of Grace ; and in regard to that presence, as truly his own, Christ himself declares, “ I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.” This presence, beloved, of Christ, by his Spirit in our hearts, let us ever prize ; and above all things seek.

When you gather in the name of Jesus, be not satisfied unless He thus be with you ; and He will be, He is most surely, when your faith is lively, when your hearts are knit together in love, when spiritual and Scriptural worship is humbly offered, when his blood and righteousness is the sinner’s only plea. He is present, not on the altar, to be fumed with incense, and honored with

waving banners, and bowed to with prostrate form, as if He could there be localized ; but in the midst of you, in your hearts, to be loved, and honored, and trusted, and worshipped ; that you may tell Him your griefs, and breathe your vows, and whisper your requests, and confess your sins ; and ask his pardon and grace ; and that He, the same Jesus who was on earth, may love, and pardon, and sympathize with, and save you.

A COMMUNION SERMON.

“With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” — LUKE xxii. 15.

How solemnly must these words of the Lord Jesus have broken the silence of “the large upper room” in Jerusalem, where, “with his twelve Apostles,” He was about “to eat the passover.” It was, we learn from St. Paul, “the same night in which He was betrayed.” It was the occasion upon which He abolished an Old Testament ordinance which typified his salvation, and established that sacrament of the New Covenant, which is “in remembrance of Him;” and in which, “as often as they eat the bread and drink the cup,” his disciples “show the Lord’s death, till He come.” Is there any incident of our Redeemer’s life more worthy of commemoration? is there any hour, around which faith and love linger with holier memories? Eighteen hundred years have passed, yet who that has “tasted that the Lord is gracious,” but feels the power of that scene, and turns to the narrative of it in the Gospel, with a

freshness that no familiarity can destroy? Wherever the Church of Christ has existence it is solemnly reënacted, and affords the simple but enduring bond of unity and fellowship. We have met to-night, dear Christian friends, in the midst of the week which is made holy by the recital of our Lord's passion, with the cross in view, and the great atonement offered thereon, leading us to the resurrection, to recall, with special service, the night on which "the Lord's Supper" was "commanded," and to express, in "the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood" of Emmanuel, and with Eucharistic worship, around "the Lord's Table," that "we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one Bread." It is no mere social compact that invites us, no voluntary agreement only that associates us, and, while the historic Church of Christ is our visible organization, it is oneness with the Master himself, which gives life to our "unity in the Spirit," and, with the golden cord of a love linked to his own heart, graciously holds us "in the bond of peace." No truer exhibition of the fellowship of "the family for which our Lord Jesus

Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross," can be given, than "the cup of blessing which we here bless," as "the communion of the blood of Christ;" and the bread which we now break, as the "communion of the body of Christ." The Lord Jesus himself ordained it, and the Church, through all ages, has never ceased, "in the breaking of bread," to "feed upon her Lord by faith, and to commune, in Him, with all his faithful people."

If the world takes pleasure in tracing to their origin its races and languages; if statesman are interested in showing the sources of their country's constitution and laws, the Christian may surely indulge a higher instinct of his renewed nature, when he recurs to the birth of the kingdom of God, and commemorates the rise of those holy institutions which are interwoven with its family history, its language of affection, and its laws of grace. I would take you, this evening, to the fountain-head, from which the stream of the Church's usage flows; and I would quicken your appreciation of this ordinance of the Redeemer, as you see Him, in the last hours of a ministry

of love, appointing it as a memorial to his disciples forever. There is something impressive in visiting the locality in which great men have lived, or where important events were transacted. Who has not felt the heart moved as he stood where genius had a home, or where heroism was illustrated, either in self-sacrifice, or in glory ? How do men take note of the battle-fields of the world, or of the haunts of poets, or of the last resting-places of the great and the good ! It is not to be wondered at, the feeling which thus seeks expression should have made its demands upon Christianity ; and that the home, and abiding places of the Incarnate Son of God, should have been sought for with avidity. But it has been observed that in regard to no one, that ever lived upon the earth, is there less certainty, as to the localities in which they abode, than in the case of our Lord. Confined, as his ministry was, to the land of his birth, though the whole of Palestine is fragrant with the memories of his life, yet, in respect to particular spots, which we would love to consecrate with the assurance that there He sat, and walked, and spake, and worked his deeds of wonder and of grace, we cannot

be certain of the topography, and must satisfy our minds with only general associations, with certain mountains and seas and cities, which were sanctified by his presence, and whose names can never die out of the recollection of the readers of the Gospels. With a life so unique, and a history so authentic, it is from the inspired record, rather than from the scenes of his ministry, that we gather vivid conceptions of the Son of Man. A universal Saviour, his biography is the peculiar treasure of no single country ; and men of all climes are equally interested in his glory. There is, however, in the narrative of the Evangelist, a graphic power which takes hold of the imagination ; and while the portrait is that of the mind and character, and physical features are not so much as hinted at, there is the vividness of reality, carefully guarded by the exactness of truth. Upon this likeness, presented to us on every side by the four biographies, we should gaze with ardent love. The flowing stream of the Church's life, through ages, is to be freshened ever from the fountain-head of truth and love incarnate in Jesus Christ. As we gather to-night around the table of the Lord, brethren in Him, liv-

ing by his life, and bound together in “the unity of his Spirit,” let us be carried back to “the night in which He was betrayed,” and sit with Him, and the twelve whom He had chosen. It is not mere imitation that we would attempt: the Church is free to adapt herself, in ritual observances, to varying necessities; so that the oneness of the faith, as “delivered to the saints,” be intact. It is the truth, that we would grasp; the life, which we would secure; the love, that we would reproduce. Let us enter that upper room. I know not how it was arranged; the custom of the Jewish festival was, no doubt, observed; but this is not dwelt upon in the inspired narrative. That it is the passover, and that there is the appointed food of the occasion, and the cups of wine, which were drank in thanksgiving, are all that seem noted. Nor is it with the old feast, now passing out of view, that we have to do; “the New Testament” in the Saviour’s “blood” absorbs to itself the interest. It is not the posture of the Lord, or his guests, that I am engaged with. He sits, or lies at table, as was the usage of the times. But with the Master himself, I am deeply concerned. He is near “the

hour of darkness," and "the baptism" that He longed for is at hand. Never in all his association with the twelve has He appeared more distinctively their Lord.

You can form no conception of that scene, in which Christ is not the central figure. Painters have taxed their art to give reality to the Supper, but however they may arrange the table, and place the disciples, the Master in all cases unites the children of his family around Himself. It is so in the words of my text: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." It is so in his words of institution: "My body and my blood, given and shed for you." It is so, when He appoints the sacrament, "in remembrance of me." This is the thought which is expressed, where He says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches; abide in me, and I in you." This it is which gives the saddest solemnity to the warning, "One of you shall betray me." If there is any significance, my brethren, in this feast at all, it sets forth a present Jesus. It did so at the beginning; it does so now. I see around that table, at the time of the institution, the loving John, "leaning on his Master's breast;" the ar-

dent Peter, full of earnest protestations of faithfulness to his Lord ; the affectionate Thomas, who on another occasion said, “Let us go and die with Him ;” James, who would have “sat on his right hand in his kingdom ;” Bartholomew, or Nathaniel, who saw in Him the antitype of Jacob’s ladder of communication between God and man ; and all the other disciples of Jesus, full of personal devotion to Him, now softened into sadness at the unwelcome words which He speaks of leaving them. Even the traitor appreciates but too well the central interest of the occasion ; and appears in bold pretension to have thrust himself on the right hand of the Master, just opposite where love was nestling near his heart. At the Lord’s table, the supreme, absorbing thought is Christ. The passover pointed forward to his deliverance ; and this, which takes its place, speaks, O ! how eloquently, of a present Saviour, whose death is our life.

And we cannot be unmindful that, on this “night to be remembered,” it is “the Son of Man, who is going as it is written of Him.” The whole scene is crowded with human affections and sympathies. It is in-

deed a family gathering. The Elder Brother sits with those who are dear to Him as his own soul, and they are called in his loving voice, not servants, but friends. How strong is that instinct of our nature which causes us to cherish memorials of those we love ! How universal is the interchange of tokens of regard ! How unspeakably tender are the last moments of intercourse with those who are dying ! How we watch their glances of affection, and cherish their words of farewell ! Promises made to them are doubly sacred, and requests which they leave behind are laid up in the heart, as a precious trust. The closing hours bring into review all that we prized in character, all that was amiable in conduct. The shadow of the grave deepens the lines of memory, and the sadness of separation makes the recollection of past joys more vivid. There must have been much of this feeling in the hearts of the twelve, as they sat around their Master at this last passover. If they knew not the bitterness of the grief that was in store for them, yet, because of what He had said of his going away, "sorrow had filled their hearts ;" and that "none of them asked, Whither goest

Thou," was the silent but most expressive confession of their sadness. How must the man Christ Jesus in that hour have wound Himself around their hearts! Never had they felt Him so necessary to their happiness ; it was his tender appreciation of their distress, that called forth the words of encouragement, so full of the sympathy of his soul, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." And is there not for us, my brethren, as we sit with Jesus at his board, the same fellowship with his humanity? Do we not find here "a friend who sticketh closer than a brother"? May not all our affections be in exercise, as we "remember his love," and appreciate his goodness? "I sat down under his shadow," may the believer exclaim, "with great delight; He hath brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me is love."

But who does not feel that "a greater than Solomon is here?" No perfection of manhood is equal to this office. The twelve in the upper room must have felt the present God. Their faith was feeble, and their understandings needed the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost, as at Pentecost ; but, as

often before, there had been “ the brightness of the Father’s glory ” “ shewing Himself through the lattice,” and they were amazed ; so now, especially, must that chamber have been irradiated with the unearthly splendor “ of the Everlasting Son of the Father.” What act of Christ, on this occasion, is to be understood at all, if He were not “ the Son of God ” ? I will not speak of the egotism of the whole scene, which nothing but the catholic faith in his Divinity can account for. I will not dwell on his self-confidence in this hour of danger. I will not insist upon the bold attraction of all to Himself ; with faith, and love, and hope, centering supremely in Him. I will not pause to consider his royal gifts and legacies to his Church, and his bold presentation of his “ wills ” to God, when He claims for his people a share in the “ glory which He had with Him from the beginning.” I will not produce examples of his searching the heart, rebuking and warning the traitor, nor of his utterances concerning the devices of Satan, foretelling his own death and resurrection. I have not time to gather all the beams which are struggling through the darkness of this night, from the veiled

Sun of Righteousness, as He enters into the cloud of his passion. I ask you to consider a single fact—a demonstration of the truth: I mean the institution of the Supper. “And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” Such is the simple ordinance of Christ’s appointment. But its simplicity is its grandeur. It is the ordinance, not of man, but of God; of one who has said, “I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” He now sets forth, in sacramental signs, what He then declared in words, “I am that Bread of Life.” The eye shall help the ear, and each shall discover to faith its life-giving sustenance, the Incarnate Son of God, fed upon spiritually, in the heart, by all who live in Him. “The words that I speak unto you,” He tells us, “they are spirit and they are life.” But who could have uttered

them, except “the Son of the living God”? What mere man, standing at the door of death, could look beyond it, and see the Church that would be born from his pierced side, and leave it, for all time, such a memorial of Himself; such a visible sign and token of life in Him, and salvation from his death? I dwell not here, upon the feeding upon Christ by faith, but I ask who is this, who appoints “the sacrament of so great a thing”? His Godhead stands revealed, and surely as we gather around this holy table, and see the memorials of his body broken, and his blood shed upon the cross for us miserable sinners, “we must give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man.”

My brethren, I will not detain you from that feast, by any prolonged discussion of the grace which it exhibits, and the life which it conveys by an outward and visible sign, to believing hearts. I would only have you, on this evening especially, to draw near to this holy table with the solemn recollection of that first communion. Let

us realize the continuity and oneness of the Church of Christ. It is not now confined, as at first, to secret gatherings in upper chambers ; but it may, thanks be to God, come out into the blaze of day, and, in churches dedicated to public worship, call upon the Lord, publish the gospel of his grace, and observe in the face of all men, the ordinances of his appointment. But if the mind is ever in danger of being led away from the simplicity of faith, let us refresh our hearts with the inspired records of primitive piety, and primitive worship. Let us hold fellowship with the past, and rebind from Scripture the chain of love which links us, in the faith, with Apostles and their Lord. As we left our homes to-night, the same paschal moon looked gently down upon us, which shone on Jerusalem when the traitor "went out" to deliver up his Lord, and which shed its cold shimmer upon the slopes of Olivet, and into the thickets of Gethsemane, when the Man of sorrows was borne to the ground, bleeding, in his agony. The same star-lit heavens arch above us, and the angels, who spared one of their companions to be a strengthener of our Master, as " ministering spirits, min-

ister from thence to the heirs of salvation." The changes of earth are many, and often sad. We miss from our assemblies companions of former years. Hopes and anticipations are here disappointed. But the heavens in their calmness remind us of Him who "changeth not;" and the Church, which has been "redeemed from among men," by the precious blood of the Son of God, should partake of the stability of the rock on which she is built. We look, in the Word of Inspiration, for "the faith once delivered to the saints;" we confess it in the creeds of the primitive ages; we give expression to Scripture truth in the liturgical worship, which the martyrs of the Reformation purified for us, amid the fires of persecution. Let us, as we commune to-night at our Master's table, seek to be indeed in harmony with the first disciples. While we adore "the man, who is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts," let us rest upon his atoning sacrifice, feed upon Him as the Living Bread, and realize, in view of his cross, the oneness of those for whom He shed his blood.

Christ will be present with us, as He was in the upper chamber; and we shall carry

from hence, written upon our hearts by his Holy Spirit, “ the new commandment which He hath given us,” “ As I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”

THE ONE MAN WHO CANNOT BE CON- VICTED OF SIN.

“ Which of you convinceth me of sin ? ” — JOHN viii. 46.

THIS is a remarkable inquiry to be uttered by any man. It is such a bold appeal as could be put forth only where there was absolute righteousness. It is the voice of innocence inviting investigation, and in no way shrinking from scrutiny.

Which of you, my hearers, could think of making it, even where you were least known ? Which of you would dare to put it forth, even though there may be but the most inadequate knowledge of your sinful heart, and the too easy forgetfulness of your life and conduct ? I have never seen or heard of the man who would not feel himself forced to acknowledge some fault, even though he should plead that it is “ a small one,” and bring with it a ready excuse. And in all history, ancient and modern, and through all the volumes of biography with which the world abounds, you shall search in vain for the character, save the one from

whom the question of the text proceeds, which, however high and noble and pious, could invite, or bear such an investigation. Whether you read the records of Scripture or examine the annals of nations, you will find neither hero nor saint without fault. History furnishes no character that has not its shade, as well as its sunlight ; its blots of shame, amid, it may be, brilliant attractions of genius and greatness. Think of any man that ever lived, and see if the errors of a fallen humanity do not weave themselves in with his story, however noble and excellent.

But here you have a Man, standing amid his countrymen, among whom He has been going in and out for thirty years, whose attention has been attracted to his life by circumstances of peculiar interest ; you have grouped around Him friends, who have shared his intimacy, and have been associated with Him in the closest intercourse, and you have arrayed against Him enemies, who are excited by the strongest feelings of prejudice and dislike ; men who have been stung by his reproofs, and made to tremble for their authority and position, by his lofty claims ; who have watched Him with the keenest hate, and sought to entangle Him

with guile, and betray Him, if possible, into some fault ; who have been haunting his steps, and marking his ways, and plotting actively against his life ; who have observed his deeds, and treasured up his words, and are anxious, above all things, to have some “ occasion ” against Him : and before them all, He boldly flings out a challenge, invites an investigation, calls for the exposure of anything that may be wrong ; and presses them with the demand to which the attention of all is attracted by the individuality of the appeal : “ Which of you convinceth me of sin ? ”

And is there any attempt at reply ? Is any fault charged ? Does either friend or foe appear to give answer ? Or, from that day to this, during a period of eighteen hundred years, with the whole earth interested in the history of the speaker, and many passionately enlisted against his claims upon their service, and some of the keenest intellects that the world has produced arrayed in opposition to the religion of which He is the author, and much controversy, and great bitterness and hostile misrepresentation, has there ever been the smallest attempt to bring forward an accusation, or to cast any

slur whatever upon the purity and moral beauty of the character so boldly submitted to scrutiny ? On the contrary, have not opposers of this gospel been themselves eulogizers of Jesus ? And is it not from the lips of infidels that we have heard some of the most eloquent tributes to his surpassing excellence ? Have not those who despise his claims, and scorn his message, and separate themselves, with the utmost care, from any suspicion of being his disciples, come forward voluntarily as his biographers ? And while they would tear from his brow the crown of glory with which, from everlasting, He was invested, and would remove, if they could, from his history all that is supernatural, and are reasoning with a philosophy, falsely so called, upon " the causes of his greatness " and the extent of his admitted power, yet seek to make Him the hero of their romances, and endeavor to give a glow to their own vain imaginations, as they reflect on their pages the splendor of his career, and the sublime majesty of his person ? Is it not a fact of deepest significance, apart from all other evidences of the truth of the Christian revelation, that Jesus of Nazareth is acknowledged as unequaled

among men, and that however the corrupt heart of sinners may impel them to hate his holiness, and put from them his laws, they have not been able, any of them, to construct a single charge against Him ; but are forced by the necessity of the case to uncover in his presence, and confess that some remarkable one is before them ? That which was enacted with so much solemnity in Jerusalem, at the bar of the Roman governor, when Pilate again and again declared that he " found no fault in Him," and " took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person," is now repeated by many in all parts of the world, who like him, in the presence of Truth itself, yet ask with a voice of skepticism and a malicious sneer, " What is truth ? " They despise the good tidings of salvation ; but they dare not vilify the character of the Saviour. His challenge they cannot respond to, and they fail universally to " convince Him of sin." Herod, on his part, is no more successful here than Pilate, and his savage mockery only brings out, as from a dark background, the sublimity of the silent Sufferer ; and ever since, the mad assaults of unbelief have

but thrown into greater prominence the grand character of Christ. From the day when the dying Julian exclaimed, "Nazarene, thou hast conquered," to the period when Voltaire (who had written, with horrid blasphemy, "Crush the wretch!") solicited, in the supposed hour of death, the offices of the Church; and when Strauss is reported to have renounced his elaborate folly, in favor of a juster criticism and truer creed; the attacks of the enemy have only caused the form of the Captain of salvation to tower more grandly above the field of battle, and have been the occasion of the clearer demonstration of his surpassing excellence. Now I point you to this, brethren, as a fact to be noticed. I stand and repeat the challenge of my Master, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" and I bid you observe that the failure, on the part of any man of any age, whatever may have been his attitude in regard to the gospel, to detract from the purity of Christ's life, and the perfectness of his character, is a thing so remarkable, that it is in itself a demonstration of the divinity of his person, and the truth of his message. No other character has not been blackened, in some degree,

in the strife of controversy, and the onset of passion ; and no other character, we must admit, is to be found, which, however worthy, has not that about it, if it be thoroughly scrutinized, which will allow of, if it does not invite, censure. "There is no man that sinneth not." "If I justify myself," saith Job, "mine own mouth shall condemn me : if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." But the character of Jesus stands alone. It towers above all biography like the mountain pillowing its head upon the clouds, and piercing the vault of heaven. It is unique ; it has not any fellow ; it admits of no comparison. And this is to be observed as much in the harmony of its universal excellence, as in the transcendent superiority of each particular virtue.

This is a very marked peculiarity of the character of Jesus, to which I wish to direct attention. If you will consider any other character that has appeared upon the stage of the world, or if, in the domain of imagination, you examine the ideal productions of genius, where the hand of a master has given being to the conception of his own mind, so life-like as to impress with a sense of reality, you will always find, even if you

leave out of sight the defects and crimes which so sadly illustrate a fallen humanity, that there is a disproportion in the virtues. Some are marked and prominent, while others are wanting, or are so much in defect as to give undue preponderance to those which form the man. You can designate the personage by the virtue which he exaggerates, and which stands out without that toning down, through the presence of other qualities, which in combination would give harmony to the life. Some ruling passion shapes the course of each man's conduct. Some peculiarity of moral disposition constitutes his greatness. Your own minds, as you run through any memories of biography or of contemporaneous life, will furnish you with illustrations of what I refer to. Men may be classed and labeled by their cast of soul, as well as by their features, their complexion, or their stature. Now try any such rule of judgment upon the character of Jesus Christ, as developed in the gospel, and see how entirely you fail to make any discrimination in excellences. All the virtues are grouped in his person, with wonderful harmony and proportion ; every grace, while it stands forth, attracting admiration by its

Divine beauty, is united with every other, and the whole are blended with something of that exquisite loveliness with which the colors of the rainbow fade into each other, or the hues of flowers are insensibly mingled by the pencil of God. I cannot think of any virtue of which Christ is not the model ; and yet I cannot think of Him so that any one of the whole circle of graces which constitute the purest goodness, is unlinked from companionship with its fellows. His life is not like the broken surface of earth, upon which you trace mountain and plain, where lofty summits compel adoration, and lowly vales attract by their beauty ; it is rather the broad expanse of heaven's own placid face, where the stars beam out from a depth of azure, and the glow of morning and evening blends with the deeper hues, and brings out the loveliness of the whole.

The harmony of the moral qualities in the character of Jesus, the completeness of his perfection, the unity of his life in a diversity of spiritual endowments, which make up the entire circle of goodness, is so remarkable as to fix our gaze, and force us to the conclusion that such loveliness was not the invention of human genius, which,

in its noblest conceptions, has attempted nothing like it; much less the natural outgrowth of any of the seed of fallen Adam, where imperfection is the stamp of descent; but the manifestation of the presence of God; a proof itself, strong and irresistible, of the incarnation of Jehovah. “Never man spake like this man;” “This man hath done nothing amiss;” “Truly this was a righteous man;” and was, as this perfect and harmonious excellence demonstrates, the “Son of God.” The testimony here is from the lips of enemies, and the universal heart of man, conscious of sin and observant everywhere else of infirmity, responds. The reality of the life of Christ, and the Divinity in Him, united to manhood, seem to be impressed upon the gospel narrative, and woven in with all its facts. Man could neither have developed, nor invented, such perfections; its harmony is from heaven. And this, brethren, aids us in no small degree, in entering into the truth of Divine revelation, concerning the relation which Christ our Lord bears to the salvation of his people. Seeing the testimony of Scripture concerning the sinlessness of Jesus acquiesced in, by the silence

or the extorted confession even of his enemies, the great fact takes hold of our hearts, and faith recognizes, with profound and adoring love, "the Holy One and the Just." His presence in a world of sin is itself a pledge of relief; and we are prepared to welcome Him as the central figure in redemption. In three ways does "He who knows no sin" reveal Himself to the hearts of his believing people.

(1.) As their substitute. "He hath made Him," saith the Scripture, "to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all;" and "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." It was not only to make a pageant of holiness, in a world of evil, that "the Son of God was manifested," but "that He might destroy the works of the devil." He stood forth, the perfect man and the unequaled sufferer. He "fulfilled all righteousness," and was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" and this that He might redeem them that were under the law. He places Himself, by the appointment of the Father, in the room and stead of the sinner. All

that the commandment required us to do, He accomplished; all that the law, which we have violated, inflicted in the way of penalty, He endured. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with his stripes we are healed." There can no other satisfactory account be given, of the unparalleled suffering and shameful death of Him "in whom" God himself declared "He was well pleased." You will find that part of the gospel narrative which leads you to the cross, a mystery indeed, until you hear the voice of God saying, "For the transgression of my people was He stricken."

And now the tree of shame becomes the emblem of self-sacrificing goodness, and the token of covenanted mercy. The doctrines of atonement and vicarious sacrifice for the guilty, with the imputation of Emmanuel's righteousness, through faith, for the justifying of the ungodly, throw a flood of light upon the story of the Evangelist, and open to us that blessed truth, the essential power and glory of Christianity, that the holiness of Jesus is the basis of redemption. If no man, nor angel, nor God himself, can "con-

vince Him of sin, then “ In the Lord, shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.” “ Who shall lay anything,” asks the Apostle, “ to the charge of God’s elect ? It is God that justifieth ; who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again ; who is ever at the right hand of God ; who also maketh intercession for us.” “ The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

(2.) But Christ is the life, as well as the sacrifice of his people ; their strength, because He is their righteousness. The holiness which we observe in the Redeemer flashes out, to them who look upon Him by faith, the conviction of his Divinity. “ He is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person ; ” “ in Him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” It is thus only that his righteousness, though assailed with all the powers of evil, is triumphant over all temptation. An innocent Adam fell before the snare of Satan ; but “ the second Adam ” foils the tempter, because He is “ the Lord from heaven,” and as, by reuniting his people to Himself through faith, He presents them “ faultless before God,” “ the righteousness

of God in Him ; so, from his Divine person there flows forth, to every believing heart, the power of a new and heavenly life. That person, adorned with all the graces of holiness, is most attractive to the heart. God draws us to Him, in Christ, with the “cords of a man, and the bands of love ;” the compassion, the sympathy, the tenderness, the goodness of Jesus are the powerful forces which the Spirit of Grace employs to ravish us with his love. “My beloved,” exclaims the spouse, “is the chiefest among ten thousand ;” faith discovers all it longs for in the Son of God, and as it appropriates Him through grace in all his offices, his Divine power is disclosed. “Of his fullness do we receive grace for grace ;” the union of love is the strength of the redeemed soul, and the believer, as he clings to the cross and grasps the Saviour, exclaims with the Apostle, “I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” The same Christ, who is “upon the believer the righteousness of God,” is also “in him, the hope of glory.”

(3.) And here comes constantly into view another and most blessed relation of Jesus Christ to his justified, believing, and therefore accepted people. He is their example. "Christ," saith St. Peter, "suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." So glorious is this office which He bears to his believing children, that some have sadly mistaken it as all his work; but it grows out of, and is only possible, by reason of his atonement and grace. When we are through faith "accepted in the Beloved," then is it our duty and privilege, as his regenerate seed, to follow his steps, as we "walk in newness of life."

And now all the glory of his sinless perfection bursts upon our view. Here is a pattern that we can imitate throughout; no deduction is to be made for infirmity of any sort; the path is full of the sunshine of holiness; not only heroic virtues, and active powers of life, but passive graces, sweet, modest gifts of humility and meekness, tenderness and love, bloom along this way-side. O, how different a model is Jesus, from that afforded by any other man, whose life history delivers to us! How wide the sweep of his majestic greatness, how minute

the filling out of the smallest requirement of perfection ! The gospel narrative would seem a romance of goodness to us poor sinners, if it were not all so true ; and if we did not know, by faith, “ Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever,” our Brother and Friend. It is all just, the believing heart feels, when it describes Him ; there is blended in Him the sublimity of lofty virtue, with the sweetest touches of child-like loveliness. It reminds you of the Alpine rose, blooming fresh and sweet under the grand snow mantle of the king of mountains. It is the same blended sweetness and majesty which is in God himself ; for here is the Word, “ the image of God.” Let us study his life, and, through grace, imitate his holiness. You shall never convince Him of sin ; and in this, because He is your Saviour, is found, believer, your safety, your strength, and your constant directory of life and action. Our religion is Christ.

THE GODHEAD OF CHRIST, THE ONLY KEY TO HIS CHARACTER.

Preached in Grace Church, Charleston, S. C., on the night of Sunday, January 22, 1871, in the united services of the Church in that city.

“What manner of man is this?” — MATTHEW viii. 27.

SUCH was the inquiry of the disciples when, in their fishing-boat upon the lake of Galilee, they beheld the Master, whom their cry of fear had aroused from sleep. “Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea.” Where a moment since there had raged “a tempest, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves,” “there was a great calm.” The assumption of such an authority by one clothed with the weakness of humanity, and the command issued to the elements, and obeyed by “the winds and the sea,” made them marvel. And well it might; for in what presence is the impotence of man more apparent, than where “the waves of the sea rage horribly”? The Lord, “who dwelleth on high, is mightier:” but who, save He, can “still the noise of the seas”? As the terrified

fishermen looked upon Him whom they had awakened from his pillow to share their danger, and saw Him claim the prerogative of God, must they not have been amazed? Did they not require the knowledge of his Divinity, in order that they might acquit Him of presumption? And was not their confession, upon a like exhibition of authority, at another time, the only explanation of the fact: "Of a truth Thou art the Son of God."

And what is observed in this incident of our Lord's life, we claim to be true of his whole career; not merely in outward manifestations of power, but as regards his moral nature, and in all that belongs to Him as a historical personage. I am bold to affirm, to-night, that if you receive the gospel record of the life of Jesus as authentic, the truth of his Godhead, revealed by the Scriptures and confessed in the creed of the Catholic Church, is the only key to his character.

Modern assailants of Christianity do not, like their predecessors, indiscriminately deny the facts of our religion. The historical Christ has shed too brilliant a light across the ages, and has exercised too potent

an influence upon society, for any one taking note of human progress to reject Him as a factor in the affairs of men. The plan adopted is to recognize his presence, accept the main incidents of his life, and eulogize the moral beauty of his character. There are those who would rewrite his biography ; and with the colors of fancy, paint an ideal which they would have us receive in place of the portrait of the Evangelists. But in furnishing a hero for romance, they despoil the original of his glory, and present an outline which is seen to be impossible, the moment that the facts of history come into view. The great and good man whom they set before us, when the authentic records of his life are examined, is found to have put forth claims, performed acts, and exhibited traits of character, which, if we are to leave out of view the underlying fact of his Godhead, are irreconcilable with any theory of high moral excellence. If Jesus Christ is not “ very God of very God,” then can no defense be put forth in his behalf, which can vindicate his conduct from the most serious errors ; and the closer his career is scrutinized, the more thorough will be the conviction that He must, in spite of all that

is attractive in his character, be charged with what every Christian believer, who cherishes love to Him as a Saviour, and loyalty as a king, would sooner perish than pronounce. We cannot accept these false-hearted tributes to our Lord. He must be worshipped, or He cannot be beloved. He must be adored, as one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, or He cannot be thoroughly admired. To maintain this position, by an examination of all his words and deeds, would exceed the limits of a discourse. I must content myself with a few particulars, which may stand as examples of the argument. It will scarcely be denied, that the character of Jesus Christ claims attention. The form in which his goodness is cast is unique. It admits of no comparison ; but, like some cloud-capped summit, lifting itself above surrounding peaks, stands amid the heroes of earth, solitary and alone. Nor in its sublime elevation above all the sons of men, is its harmony and completeness to be lost sight of. In others of our race, some one trait has the preëminence ; and not unfrequently, defects of constitution bring out into bolder relief the points that are admired. A single virtue glows amid the infirmities

of humanity, and like the evening star enthroned upon a cloud, its beauty from the contrast appears more dazzling. This is especially the case in some of the great creatures of genius, where a single passion is brought into view, and the mind is en-chained by the admiration which it excites.

You can recall no great personage of history, or review no favorite embodiment of fancy, in whom you will not distinguish the particular feature of character for which it is remarkable. You pass through the gallery of portraits which adorn the corridors of time; you are able to classify and arrange your heroes; the greatness of each is a peculiar type. But where you stand before the Christ of the Gospels, you can make no distinction in his excellence. There is no predominance of virtues, but a harmony of goodness makes beautiful the whole. The active and the passive graces lovingly combine. Masculine strength and womanlike tenderness, gentleness and power, boldness and meekness, unite to constitute the most absolute purity that the mind can conceive. "What manner of man is this?" we are forced to ask, as we notice how his splendor pales all lesser orbs. The Christ of history,

with all that is supernatural, beyond his moral qualities, veiled from view, is of a cast of goodness which lifts the thoughts to heaven, and forces on us the conviction that He has there his home. The world has been unable to pass before this central figure of the race, without involuntary homage. But we maintain that if the scrutiny is close, and the record of the life of Jesus, as given by the Evangelists, is accepted, this harmony will be marred by most inexplicable contradictions, and that these can only be removed when faith has taken in her hand the key of his Godhead, and adoring love recognizes his full-orbed glory, as "the Man who is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." In illustration of this position, I shall select from the completed circle of Christ's excellence, as not being able to consider all his graces, two of his most attractive qualities: qualities which, if they were absent from his moral portraiture, would leave us without "the form of comeliness" which we love; and yet, traits which are essentially in antagonism to acts and declarations upon his part, and which cannot be denied, without giving up the Scripture narrative of his life. The fea-

tures in the character of Christ, to which I shall confine your notice, are his truthfulness and his lowness. And you must admit, that to deprive Him of these would be to blot out from the firmament of history the most splendid constellation which has ever burned upon the night of this sinful world.

(1.) When our Lord was arraigned before Pilate, in answer to the appeal of the Roman Procurator, He made this impressive declaration : “ To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” It is the key-note of his character ; and his life possesses no greater charm than that transparent sincerity which sheds upon the surrounding darkness of human action the light of heaven. He is, as named in Revelation, “ the faithful and true witness.” His “ beloved disciple,” who leaned on his bosom, and was admitted to his intimacy, rejoices in “ knowing Him that is true ;” and even his enemies, when they combine “ to entangle Him in his talk,” are forced to the confession, “ We know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth : neither carest Thou for any man, for Thou

regardest not the person of men." If this were but a flattering speech, it at least shows what was the impression upon the popular mind, as to his integrity. And where can any one discover, in his whole career, the slightest swerving from the right? With the courage which must support truth, if she is to make no compromise, Christ calmly goes forward, facing every enemy, quailing before no opposition, looking steadily into the eye of death. And does the history of our race present any example that can be compared with his, in detecting falsehood? With what majesty do his reproofs, like the lightning which clears the clouds, scathe, with their own keenness, the subterfuges of the hypocrite, and discover the shams and pretensions of the self-righteous! What awe is there in his denunciation of the Pharisees! What calm, yet thorough refutation of the Sadducees! If ever, my brethren, truth fresh from her home in the bosom of God, radiant in beauty, and strong in her own glory, has stood upon our earth, embodied for the admiration of men, and panoplied against falsehood, it was in the person of Jesus Christ. Evil saw Him, and trembled. Error fled from his presence, as

night at the blush of dawn. Falsehood, blinded by his purity, was taken in her own toils. Hypocrisy shrank from the gleam of his supernal beauty. Sincerity bowed at his feet, and innocence flew for protection to his sheltering arms. Faith hung upon his promises, and childhood, meek, gentle, and confiding, nestled in his bosom. And yet, if we are to deny that He, in whom truth thus found her reality, was God, we shall have the strongest assertions to refute, the highest claims to deny, the most unqualified declarations to disbelieve. I shall not detain you with quotations. A few, selected as examples of what the narrative of the Evangelists abound with, will enable you to judge of the argument; and these are such as are inconsistent, on any other theory than that of his Godhead, with the truth and sincerity of Jesus. At the same time, passing over other Scriptures that furnish testimony, I shall present only the words of Christ himself. I know not where, in the wide field before me, I can better begin, than with that precious declaration of Jesus to Nicodemus, which may be called the gospel in epitome. You remember how this half-

persuaded Pharisee "came by night" to converse with Him whom he believed "a teacher come from God." You can never forget the gentleness of Jesus in receiving him, and the faithfulness with which He discovered the plague of his heart, and taught him the doctrine of the new birth. But what I ask you to consider now is the truth which He presents as the foundation of his trust, and the assurance of salvation. "God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Precious gospel, to which the heart of every believer clings! But what does it force us to think of Him who proclaims it? A man sits side by side with his fellow-man; he is an inquiring soul, trusting to his teacher, and asking the way of life; and that teacher makes the fact that He is the Son of God, only begotten, the rock of his hope. What would you think of the truth of any man, who should deal thus with you? who should tell you when your heart is throbbing for the knowledge of God, that he is the "only begotten" of the Father, given in love to save? How could you bear his lifting himself thus

above all other men, and claiming, in the closeness of a private conversation, the peculiar relation of sonship? Why is no explanation given, such as men are acute enough now to furnish? Why are the words "only begotten" left, in their blazing splendor, without one cloud of criticism to obscure their effulgence? What manner of man is this, who in such familiar converse, holds forth unblushingly such a claim? Surely if he were sincere, he must have thought it no robbery to be equal with God; and offering no interpretation of the relationship, would leave "all men," who heard the declaration, "to honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."

But I take another case. It is that of the centurion, who seeks to have his servant miraculously healed. I need not relate a story which is in all your memories. But I ask you to recur to the words, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed;" and to bear in mind the comparison of his authority, as a military officer and master, with that of Him whom he asks to heal. Now, here is the direct ascription, to a man,

of Divine prerogative. You will find it hard indeed to make anything else of it ; and what is the answer of Truth, when the power and majesty of God is attributed to Him ? “ Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” Or turn to the occasion of the stilling of the tempest, when the arm of Jesus plucked Peter from the deep. Upon the power displayed in such a miracle, I have dwelt in connection with the text. It called forth in that instance, the inquiry from the disciples, “ What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him ? ” Now when the winds ceased, at the presence of their Master, “ the disciples worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth, Thou art the Son of God.” Is there any check upon our Lord’s part, to this reverence ? any explanation of this mistake ? Was this, in the twelve, only Oriental courtesy ? or can we possibly clear the sincerity of Jesus, if He was no more than man, from the censure of a silence which sanctioned the adoration ?

But these are inferences, you may say ; let us take a more direct word. The Saviour is with the Apostles, in the familiarity of family intercourse. It is a time of deep

solemnity ; a solemn sadness, as at the approach of death, is on the hearts of men, for the Master's words have been weighty with the burden of the cross. And yet there are the flashing of promises, and gleams of heaven, upon "this hour of darkness ;" and with the religious consciousness aroused, and "the powers of the world to come" in view, "Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." What an opportunity here for rational distinction, and the clearing up of mystery ! What a solemn and affecting appeal, from a voice crying in the night of this world, for the light of God and truth ! And what do we read ? "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip ? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father ; and how sayest thou then, show us the Father ? Believest thou not, that I am in the Father and the Father in me ? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself : but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." What a comment is this on that other word of Jesus, so clear and grand to all who will receive it, "I and my Father are one." But what shall we think of the truth of a mere man,

who, with the grave in view, and the cross overshadowing his future, thus confounds the minds of the simple, and leaves his little ones, at the last hour, either to cling to “the faith once delivered to the saints” or else to be lost in a maze of ingenious criticism, whose greatest utility is, that it brings out, in clearer distinctness, the precious truth, that Christ here declares himself, as apostles and martyrs confessed, “the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person,” — “in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily”? It were easy to add to these examples, but I have contented myself with such as are sufficient for my purpose. If these acts and declarations of Christ were done and spoken when He was perfectly aware that He was only a man, like you and me, — for it is to this, that denial of his essential Divinity must come at last, — then where is any plea for truthfulness? We must surrender the purest character that history has handed down, to companionship with deceit and imposture. The juggling prophet of Mecca made no such pretensions; and the claims of the Grand Lama to be an incarnation of God would be only a parallel blasphemy.

(2.) And now consider the other trait of the character of Jesus, his lowliness. It was foretold by the prophet Zechariah, that Messiah should be “lowly.” And Jesus, when He invited the heavy laden to take his easy yoke upon them, declared, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” Who, that has read the story of the reputed “carpenter’s son,” the “friend of publicans and sinners,” who “had not where to lay his head,” can fail to appreciate the description? His daily life was the illustration of his beatitude, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” When He was born there was no room for Him in the inn ; a stable was his home, and a manger was his cradle. As an infant, He was an exile. The despised Nazareth sheltered his youth. “Capernaum,” not Jerusalem, “was his own city ;” when He attended the festivals on Zion, Bethany was his chosen retreat. He withdrew Himself from the multitudes, whenever He could snatch a moment from active benevolence ; He enjoined men to be silent about his mighty works ; He rejected a crown, rendered tribute to Cæsar, checked the fierce zeal of his disciples, and found his companions among fishermen. He lived in

poverty, and died upon the cross. His motto was, "I seek not mine own glory." A man equally humble and unselfish, the world has not seen. He taught mankind a new virtue ; for which heathen sages found no expression, in any language of the earth. He eclipsed the glitter of pride, with the grace of humility, instructed the Church that to suffer was more glorious than to conquer. The lamb is as symbolic of his temper, as it is expressive of the vicarious sacrifice, which, on Calvary, He offered for sin. The Holy Ghost descending on Him at his baptism, in the form of a dove, is a significant manifestation of his gentleness and meekness. And yet, my brethren, this is the man, who, while He puts from Him proffers of the world and Satan, and separates Himself from the ambition of men, asserts claims the most awfully august. It startles us to hear Him say, with a calmness which forces consideration of his meaning, " My Father is greater than I." Would you hesitate to charge any man with a pride bordering on madness, who presumed to make such a comparison ? What manner of man is this," who is to be measured in his greatness, with God ? Whatever

interpretation you put upon the words, they of necessity assert a dignity, above that of any created intelligence. Angels assimilate themselves in no degree to Jehovah. In his presence they veil their faces ; and “ to Him cherubim and seraphim continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.” That the Christ ventures to vouch Himself only below the Father, whether it be in his humiliation as Mediator, or as begotten of the Father, “ God of God,” as some understand the passage, if He be not Divine, is an instance of pride the most unparalleled.

But we hear loftier utterances than this : “ I and my Father are one ; ” “ I am in the Father, and the Father in me ; ” “ Before Abraham was, I am ; ” and many like expressions are recorded. He permits Himself to be hailed, by men, as “ My Lord and my God ; ” “ the Son of God ; ” and with titles of similar import. Devils confess Him “ the Holy One of God.” His disciples worship Him, cry to Him for mercy, own Him Lord, ask for “ the increase of faith,” for the “ help of their unbelief,” and for blessings temporal and spiritual ; and when He hangs upon the cross, the thief at

his side appeals to Him to be “remembered in his kingdom.” And what is the attitude of this humblest of men, under these circumstances ? Does He check the idolatry, enlighten the ignorance, rebuke the blasphemy of prayer addressed to man ? Does He, like Peter and Paul and the other Apostles, cry out in earnest protest, “We are men of like passions with you”? Does He, like the angel before whom St. John fell in the Apocalypse, answer, “Worship God”? Not at all. On the contrary He receives prayer and adoration, as his right ; He forgives sins ; He dispenses blessings in his own name ; He bids the penitent, who weeps at his feet, “Go in peace ;” and assures the dying malefactor, “To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” Putting from Him an earthly crown, He claims a kingdom “not of this world ;” pronounces Himself “the Lord and Master” of his people, threatens his enemies with his advent in glory, to call them to his bar ; and assures his servants with the promise of the Comforter, and the precious hope of his coming again to receive them unto Himself.” We are admitted to his privacy ; we see Him “lifting up his eyes to heaven” and calling

in prayer upon his Father ; and in that solemn intercourse, He communes with Him “of the glory which He had with Him before the world was ;” and calls upon Him to “glorify his Son.” Now think of a mere man speaking thus ; putting forth, in the face of men, claims which no other mortal ever dreamed of ; in the midst of his poverty, asserting the royalty of heaven and earth, and all power, as Mediator and Judge ; and then addressing God Himself, with a demand, that He should “glorify Him, with his own self, with the glory which He had with Him before the world was.” If this is the language of one who is not God, then I am at a loss to conceive how pretension could be more bold, or self-assertion could rise higher. Of necessity, I have only touched upon the proof ; passages crowd upon the mind as our thoughts are turned in this direction ; and it is altogether probable that many may occur to you, stronger and more to the point, than those which I have selected. But if I have placed the argument before you in such a form that you may pursue it for yourselves, by a reference to God’s Word, I shall have succeeded in my purpose. Sure I am, that if you ac-

cept the inspired narrative, when you see Jesus of Nazareth deliberately putting forth such claims, you must either acknowledge Him as God, or refuse to do homage to his humility. No man, who was not a wild enthusiast, or a self-asserting impostor, would hazard such expressions as abound in the teachings of Christ. He is God ; or the pride of Lucifer hath been surpassed, in the lowliest character that history delivers to us.

Now this argument might be carried into other departments of Christ's character ; other traits might be selected, which fade away before the contradictions of the phenomena, if the humanity of Christ is all that is admitted. Every page of the Gospels you will find asserting, with more or less distinctness, the truth of Christ's Godhead. Every incident of his life is in proof of the catholic faith. The evangelic history is, as St. Mark names it, "The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Strike out the last clause of this title, or place it in the alembic of what is so strangely called "rational criticism," and explain away its significance, and you will have before you a record, which you will find it a difficult task

to deal with. Either you will reject the whole, as fable, or the historical Christ will disappear, to make way for the poor invention of rationalism. My brethren, are you ready to give up your Bible, and take instead "The Life of Christ," as invented by the romancer? Alas! what a dreary exchange would you make. Miracle will disappear; truth will be clouded; morality will be in dispute. The cross, with its atoning victim will be overthrown; the dove, that hovers above it, will be driven away; the throne of Jesus will be overturned; his sceptre will be broken; his crown despoiled. Man, instead of walking in the light of life, will be remitted to the uncertainties of the ancient philosophers, or surrendered to the changing principles of the disciples of modern progress. Nay, my brethren, let us, by God's grace, cling to the old truth of the Bible and the Church. Let us "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Let us with St. John and St. Paul, own "the Word made flesh," "God over all, blessed forevermore." Let us, with Athanasius, stand "against the world;" let us cherish, in our hearts, the scriptural Creed of Nicea; and

reverently bow before Jesus our Lord, as “of one substance with the Father ; God of God ; light of light ; very God of very God.” A Divine Saviour only can redeem us ; and if Christ is not Divine, we shall be utterly at a loss how to estimate Him. His Godhead is the only key to his character ; and that being lost sight of, we are without light or hope.

I would conclude, in the devoutly eloquent words of Mr. Liddon, who has treated at length, and with uncommon ability, the great argument which I have feebly endeavored to exhibit ; and to whose “Bampton Lectures,” as having been indebted to them myself, I would earnestly refer all who would have their faith in Christ scripturally instructed.

“Eternal Jesus ! it is Thyself who hast thus bidden us either despise Thee or worship Thee. Thou wouldst have us despise Thee as our fellow-man, if we will not worship Thee as our God. Gazing on thy human beauty, and listening to thy words, we cannot deny that Thou art the only Son of God most high ; disputing thy Divinity, we could no longer clearly recognize thy human perfections. But if our ears hearken to thy

revelation of thy greatness, our souls have already been won to Thee by thy truthfulness, by thy lowliness, and by thy love. Convinced, by these, thy moral glories, and by thy majestic exercise of creative and healing power, we believe and are sure that Thou hast the words of eternal life.” Although in unveiling Thyself before thy creatures, Thou dost stand, from age to age, at the bar of hostile and skeptical opinion, yet assuredly, from age to age, by the assaults of thine enemies, no less than in the faith of thy believing Church, Thou art justified in thy sayings, and art clear when Thou art judged.” “ Of a truth Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ ; thou art the Everlasting Son of the Father.”

CHRIST COMING TO JUDGMENT.

A CHRISTMAS SERMON.

“Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” — REVELATION xxvii. 12.

THESE words of our ascended Redeemer, among the last of the messages which He communicated to his people, are at all times solemn and interesting. They afford matter for serious reflection ; and are calculated to awaken the devoutest joy, or the most awful apprehension. But at a season like the present, when our Church invites us to the consideration of the first advent of her Lord, and we are gathered around the manger of Bethlehem, to admire “the great humility” in which the Son of God “came to visit us,” the mind instinctively goes forward to a scene of striking contrast ; and faith sees the great white throne erected on the clouds, and hope is looking for this “same Jesus coming again,” “in glorious majesty, to judge the quick and the dead.” The services of our Liturgy are arranged with regard to this natural transition of

thought ; and in the Epistles and Gospels for the Sundays in Advent, the first and second coming of the Son of Man are kept jointly in view. While rejoicing in the blessings of the one, we should take heed to prepare for the solemnities of the other.

The Gospel to-day presents us with our Lord's own prediction of his second advent ; its certainty being avouched, in the words, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

The speaker who in the text declares, "Behold I come," in the next verse informs us, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last," and thus identifies Himself with "One like unto the Son of Man," whom St. John had already heard claim for Himself this significant name. Addressing his Church from within the veil, the Lord Christ repeats the prediction He had made when on earth ; that "the Son of Man shall come in his glory." With his own mouth He confirms the message with which angels comforted the bereaved disciples. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come as ye have seen Him go into heaven." He puts his seal to the apostolic

prophecy, “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God.” He places it beyond question that there shall be a personal return of the ascended Mediator, “whom,” saith St. Peter, “the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”

Deeply interesting, my brethren, in view of this Divine assurance, is the inquiry as to the manner, design, and period of this second advent of our Master; and as far as the answer can be returned from Scripture, it cannot fail to prove instructive. It is true that there is difficulty in harmonizing all the prophecies relating to this event. Some, it must be lamented, have fallen into error in their interpretations; and have published their theories as the prophetic history of Christ’s kingdom. Without reverence and prayer, we may easily be misled; but this should not deter us from giving heed to the declarations of Holy Scripture. Rather should they warn us to approach the study of prophecy in a humble spirit; distrusting our own wisdom, and earnestly

seeking the guidance of the Spirit of God. We are not to expect to understand all parts of a prediction before its fulfillment ; but carefully should we seize and endeavor to profit by whatever is plain and practical, leaving it to God to make known, by the event, what at present we cannot comprehend in the prophecy. In the spirit of meekness and devotion, the investigation of prophetic Scriptures is an employment full of comfort and interest ; strengthening faith, and animating hope, with the prospects of the coming glory of Christ and his redeemed. I have chosen my text to-day, because it sets the coming of our Lord before us in its most practical aspect ; presenting it as that in which we have each a personal concern ; and bringing into view those features of this sublime event which may be easily comprehended by all men. As to the manner of the advent, further than that it will be a personal appearing of the " same Jesus which was taken up from us into heaven," the passage does not afford us information. From other portions of God's Word, we gather that it will be a triumphant approach of the crowned Mediator, majestic with Divine authority ; and

terribly sublime in every element of Divine power. "The Lord Jesus," writes St. Paul, "shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire." "His feet," saith the prophet Zechariah, "shall stand upon the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east." "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth." "And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever." St. John, in Revelation, declares: "They which have part in the first resurrection shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." "And a great white throne shall be set, and He shall sit on it; from whose face the earth and the heaven shall flee away, and there shall be no more place found for them." Daniel tells us, "A fiery stream shall issue and come forth from before Him; thousand thousands shall minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand shall stand before Him."

I have grouped these passages of God's Word, as a striking description of the manner of the coming of the Son of Man, expressive of its grandeur, and impressing upon us the most awful sense of its reality. I shall not here enter upon particulars, or

attempt to do more than help you to realize the majesty of your King. Once He came in poverty and lowness ; now He draws near with the riches and glory of God. Once He was “led as a lamb to the slaughter ;” now He goes forth “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.” Once the humanity veiled the Godhead ; now Divinity illuminates the glorified manhood. “When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of his glory.” Whatever may be the arrangement of this sublime ceremonial, when earth shall receive her Lord, it will be the hour of his signal and visible triumph ; as the Apostle named it, “the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.” In referring to the design of this advent, I shall to-day confine myself exclusively to the teaching of the text. Not because every part of that design is here unfolded, for there are doubtless other ends in view, which are not here brought to light ; but what is proposed, besides being the grandest purpose of all, furnishes us with matter of deep personal interest, and calls for the gravest and most earnest consideration. “Behold,” our Lord

declares, “I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” In this design of Christ’s coming, we profess our belief, as often as we repeat the Creed ; and for this to be prepared, we ask God’s grace in the Collect, which is used daily, during this season. I would now centre your thoughts upon the coming Mediator, “judging the quick and the dead.” In that sublime transaction, we shall every one of us, most certainly, bear a part. To that bar we are each one summoned. The convening of the court is thus described, by St. John : “I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it ; from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged every man according to their works.” Three matters claim at-

tention, in looking forward to this great assize: the person tried; the mode of procedure; and the sentence.

(1.) This is a universal judgment. Here are assembled the countless generations of earth's inhabitants. Not only they "which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," but the dead, small and great, "stand before God." The earth shall have restored the dust, to which she gave a resting place; the sea shall have given up the dead, which, through ages, have been hidden in her depths; every grave will have been rifled, every sepulchre disturbed; the bodies of all who sleep shall awake; the archangel's trump shall shake every temple, and be heard in every cemetery; and death and hades, opening their massive bars, the spirit shall return from the place of the departed, and animate once more their reconstructed tabernacles. From Adam to his last-born son, no soul that drew the breath of life shall be absent. Vast will be the throng, but in the sense of his accountability, each man shall stand, as it were, alone. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that

he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Would you, my brethren, bear this fact in mind, and picture to yourselves the vast assembly, gathered from every age and clime around the judgment-seat; would you anticipate your own position in that awed and unnumbered throng, called from your graves by the trump of God, or overtaken in the midst of life, by the sudden gathering of nations, the result might be an awaking from the indifference of worldliness, and the casting from you the apathy of sin. Who could offend, with the same carelessness, if, in the moment of temptation, we saw, with all the vividness of reality, the great white throne, and the multitude surrounding it; if we heard that which St. Jerome tells us was always loud in his ears, "Arise, ye dead, and come away to judgment;" if we beheld the books opened, and "the sin of Judah" written therein, with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond?

Consider the mode of trial which shall obtain in that august court. "The dead," St. John tells us, "were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." These are "the books of reckoning" and "the Lamb's

book of life." The former have been kept by Divine Providence, from the beginning of time ; and register the history of our race. Every man has there an ample page, upon which is recorded, under the eye of Omniscience, his minute biography. The leaf is headed with our birth-sin,—"One man's disobedience, whereby many were made sinners," and all "by nature are children of wrath." Here is described the depravity of our hearts and our carnal enmity against God ; and there, crowding the lines, and burdening the ledger, are the transgressions of our daily life, willful, diversified, repeated. Acts of omission and commission, secret and public, great and small ; sins of thought, hidden, as we hope in the secrets of our hearts ; evil imaginations ; base desires, which we would not have whispered in privacy to a friend ; sins of word ; idle and malicious breaths ; scoffs and ribald jests ; impure and blasphemous speeches ; sins of deed, committed in the face of men, or hidden in the dark, from all but the eye of God. O those wonderful books of remembrance ! what a chronicle of crime ! And these shall be brought against impenitent sinners at the bar of the Judge.

Witnessed against from hence, brethren, which of us shall not be found guilty? Our own conscience will render the verdict; and God, angels, and men, shall approve the condemnation. But the sentence is withheld, until the opening of "the Lamb's book of life,"—"the book of life," in contrast with that whose every page credits us with "the wages of sin," "death." And "the Lamb's book;" for He by his own "obedience unto death," in the stead of his people, hath, with his atoning blood, written their names in this register of salvation. Remember, my fellow sinners, at the day of judgment, this volume, shall bear its testimony for or against us. Our names, through grace, written here as believers in the Son of God, no reckoning shall be found against us. He who says to his disciples, "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven," declares, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud your transgressions; and as a cloud, your sins." How intensely solemn the inquiry, for each one of us, "Is my name in the book of life?" You cannot indeed look into that volume and read its holy record. "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God;" "He knoweth them

that are his." But you can read the word of invitation and promise in the Scriptures : "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth ;" "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out ;" you can search your own hearts, and, the Holy Spirit enlightening and quickening you, can decide on the evidence furnished by God's Word, whether you have known yourself a lost sinner, and with "a broken and contrite heart," which God will not despise, have "believed on the Lord Jesus Christ." The same Spirit, who records the name of the elect sinner in the book of life, seals him "unto the day of redemption ;" and while carrying on the work of grace in his heart and life, "bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God." And now, hear the sentence, as it is pronounced from the throne ; and mark the justice which it renders, "to give every man according as his work shall be." To those who are righteous in Christ, by faith, is assigned the fullness of the reward of his obedience. This is the name whereby He shall be called, "the Lord our righteousness," and "he that hath the Son hath life." Yet this life shall be apportioned according

to the capacity to contain it. In the constellation of the blest, as they cluster in heaven around the Sun of Righteousness, “one star differeth from another star in glory.” The greater the grace, the fuller the joy; and the more meet the saints are for glory, the more abundantly shall they receive. “He that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” And, too, in the sentence of the finally impenitent, there is the exact justice of God: they shall “reap that which they have sown, and gather that which they have strewed;” and it will add to the weight of their eternal misery, and increase the sense of that “indignation and wrath” of “God, who will render to every man according to his deeds,” for the condemned to know that they have, through a life of sin, “treasured up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.”

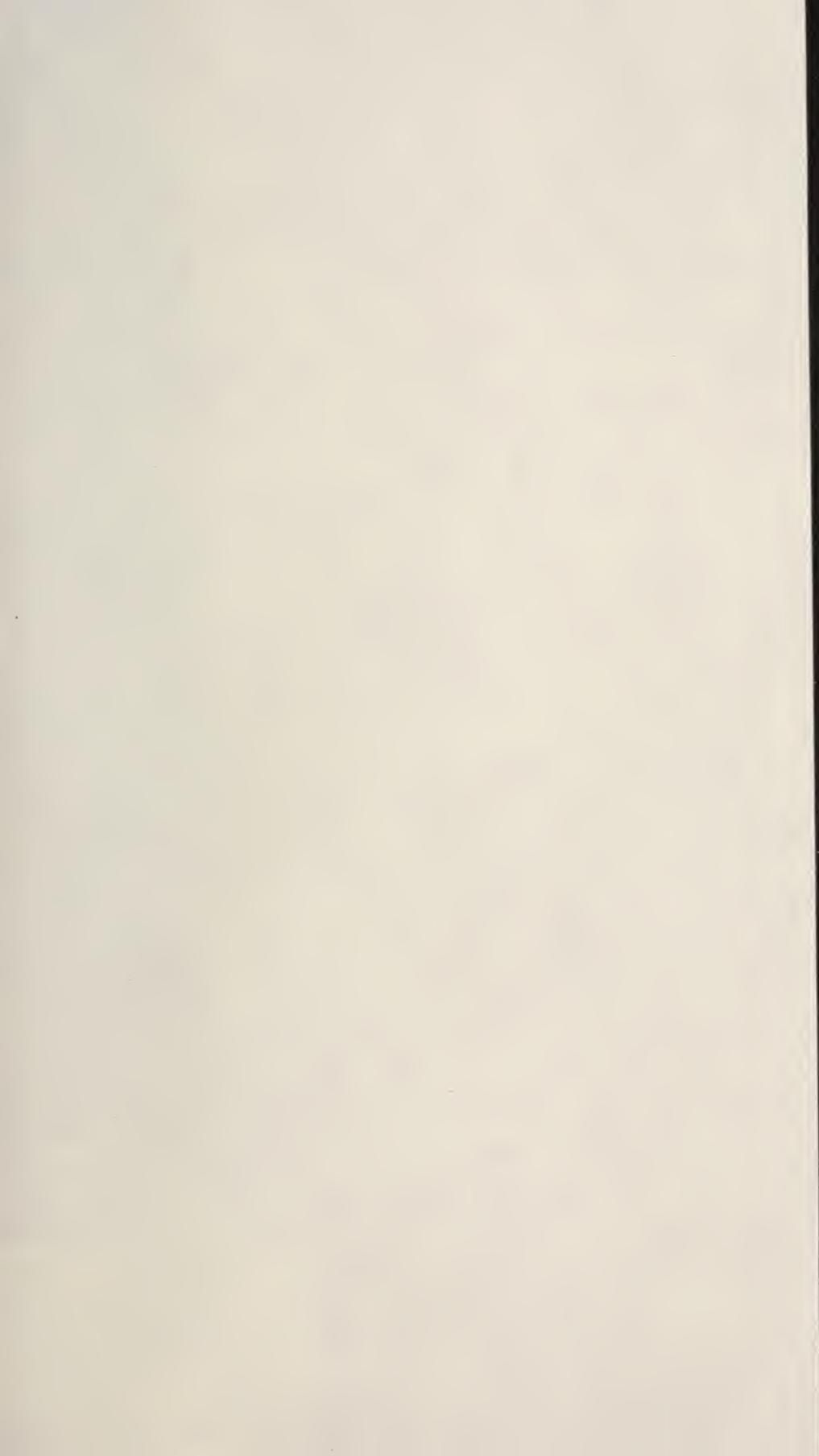
And now the thought that presses upon the soul is, When shall these things be? What is the period of our Lord’s coming? My brethren, our text furnishes the best answer to this question: “I come quickly.” You may desire a more definite statement;

you may spend labor and research in the effort to elicit from Scripture, out of the signs of the times, a more particular response, but you can find none more safe and practical,—none that should have a more direct influence upon your life and conduct. “Of that day and hour knoweth no man;” but of this we are certain. It comes. It comes quickly; all things are preparing for it; all events making way for it. Signs are around us; tokens are given us; Scriptures admonish us. Suffer not yourselves to suppose that ages lie between you and that awful hour. It is not so far as many think. It may be nearer than any one of us imagines. It will come suddenly. It will overtake us unexpectedly. It will surprise a great many: “When they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them and they shall not escape.” “Behold,” saith the Lord, “I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” “I come quickly.” It may be but a little while, and “He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” “Amid the confusions of earth, the fall of thrones and upheaval of nations, while men’s

hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth,' we may see, each one for ourselves, as we "stand in our lot," the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. But if the wheels of his chariot tarry, and for his own reasons of providence and grace, the day of his people's redemption lingers, yet, my brethren, He will come, by his messenger, Death, to each of us. It may be quickly ; let it not be without such preparation as is only to be found in personal faith in the Son of God. Remember, " It is appointed unto all men once to die ; and after that the judgment."

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